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THE JUGGLER OF NANKIN:

THE GRANDEE'S PLOT.

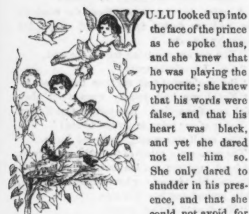
A Story of the Celestial Empire.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, Jr.

[CONCLUDED.]

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SACK!



his very breath seemed poisonous. At length, however, she was relieved of his company, for he arose, and having imparted a kiss upon her brow he turned and left the apartment, and in a moment more Lan returned.

"Lan," exclaimed the maiden, starting towards the woman and clasping her hands, "you will at least be kind to me!"

"I hope so, my lady," returned Lan, gazing with surprise upon the sudden movement of the girl.

"Then tell me what has become of Paul Arden?"

"I'm sure I don't know," said the woman, speaking in a low tone, and at the same time casting her eyes furtively about her. "But you must not speak that name in this place. If the prince hears it he will be very angry."

"But have you not heard something of him?" pursued Yu-lu. "Do you know if he has recovered from the wound he received?"

"I know nothing about him," persisted Lan, "nothing at all. But I would advise you to let him rest, and trouble yourself no more about him."

"Alas! you never loved,"

"If I could not love the prince better than a poor wandering *fan-kee*, I should never wish to love."

"*Fan-kee!*" repeated Yu-lu, starting with alarm. "How do you know that?"

"O, he betrayed himself while he raved in the prison."

"He! then he is in a prison?" cried the maiden. "Ah, Lan, you know more than that. Tell me all that you wish to be his fate."

The woman had expressed herself in part, but she would tell no more, and Yu-lu was forced to feed upon her own imagination—and that imagination painted the picture in colors as terrible as the reality could possibly have been. She saw her lover in the power of a heartless, relentless, revengeful prince, and she felt sure that death would be his portion. After she had conjured up the fatal picture she tried hard to dispel it, but it would not leave her. She had to entertain the terrible thought, now that she had once let it into her bosom, and it fastened her misery upon her with a firmer hold than ever. She forgot all about her own suffering, and while her heart beat with renewed agony it was for one whom she loved better than herself.

When the morning dawned Paul had once more recovered his reason. He had the first beams of the golden sun that came and danced upon the opposite wall, and for the while he felt invigorated and refreshed; but soon the full sense of his situation came back to him, and he leaned against the post of the grated door to commune with his grief. He was not then the Paul Arden of a week before. The flush of youthful health was gone—the blooming of his hopes was faded away—the flashing light of those dark eyes had gone out, and the form that had been erect and noble was bent and emaciated by torture and suffering. But all these symptoms gave but little index to the sharp pang that dwelt in his heart. Man can bear physical pain, for he hopes 'twill not always last, but few are the souls that can bear that utter loneliness which succeeds the tearing away

of what is loved and cherished. O, no man can know, but from bitter experience, the terrible sorrow of such a calamity. It is not the pain of a few nerves, or the twinging of sensitive muscles, but it is the utter tearing in sunder of those subtle cords that bind the heart to joy and hope, it is the trampling down of all the green shoots of life, and the withering up of all its blossoms and flowers—it is the utter midnight of the soul—a midnight so deep and black that even hope itself flies shrieking away, and the wreck of earth is left only a shattered mass with no compass or beacon to guide it through the drear darkness!

Such is the man who has lost the treasure of his soul's pursuit love, and such was Paul Arden. He groaned in the bitterness of his grief, and when he had groaned till he could groan no more he went back to his cot and sat down.

The day passed slowly away, and the youth ate all that was left of the food that had been brought him the day before; but he received no more. Twilight came with its cool breath and misty shadows, but no sentinel had yet made his appearance at the door. Paul wanted no more food, but he began to feel the need of drink. All the water in the bottle was gone, and his lips and tongue were becoming parched and hot. He listened for the coming of a visitor, but he listened in vain. He remembered that his food came not on the day before last night, and so he still hoped he should not be forgotten in his wants; but it grew dark, and still he was alone—night had fairly come, but no messenger had arrived.

It was now that new fears began to take possession of the ill-fated youth's mind; but these fears, dark as they were, lifted his heart up from the utter darkness into which it had fallen. These fears were of death—and death was not so terrible as the fate he had been brooding over. He even hoped—it was a wild, strange hope, to be sure, and it came without his bidding—he even hoped that he might die, and that Yu-lu might live from earth at the same moment. Such a hope almost made a smile upon his pale face, for it pointed its quivering finger towards heaven and re-union.

So passed the hours away. Gradually the din and bustle of the great city died away—one after another the kite-suspended lanterns disappeared from the air, and at length the silence of midnight gathered its quiet influence about the place. Paul felt of the bars of his door, and they were damp with the night-dew. He gathered off the tiny drops with his tongue, and they refreshed him. They helped to allay the heat of his thirst, and his lips were not so parched as before.

After this—after the torturing thirst had been partly stayed—Paul thought of sleep. He had reached the cot, and was just in the act of sitting down, when he heard footsteps upon the narrow walk that led to his door. He started up and went towards the grating, and he saw the rays of a light flashing through the darkness. Soon afterwards his door was opened, and two men entered. One of them bore a lantern, and the other carried in his arms a coil of rope and a large hempen sack. They were both of them stout men, and Paul could see by the very expression upon their countenances that they had come for some stern purpose. He who carried the lantern set it down, and then turned towards the prisoner.

"Are you not tired of remaining here?" he asked, in a tone which possessed but little meaning.

"It is not very pleasant here," returned Paul, shuddering as his eyes wandered instinctively to the cord and sack.

"So we thought," resumed the first speaker, "and we have come to take you away. You wouldn't have stayed here so long as you have, only you were weak, and we took pity on you."

"And whither do you mean to carry me?"

"Never mind. You shall see when we arrive at our journey's end."

"Has the prince sent you to me?"

"Very likely."

"And he has sent you to take away my life?"

"You are shrewd at guessing."

"Because I have good grounds upon which to make my surmise."

"Well, perhaps you have; but you needn't worry yourself. You will be taken good care of. Are you able to walk?"

"I think so."

"Then we will go. We will lead you, for it is quite dark, and you might not find your way alone."

"One moment," uttered Paul, as the fellow was about to take him by the arm. "Let me see the prince. Lead me to him if it is only for one moment."

"We cannot do it, sir," returned the man, as he stooped down and picked up his lantern. "The prince is plunged into mourning, and he sees no one."

"Mourning!" repeated the youth.

"Yes. His wife is dead, and he mourns for her bitterly."

"O, how base is the hypocrite! And you serve the prince?"

"Yes."

"Then you serve the blackest villain that God ever suffered to live!"

"Beware, young man."

"Of what shall I beware? You say the Princess Niao is dead?"

"She is."

"And before God I will make my oath that she died by her husband's own hand. O, if you love virtue—if you would expose the blackest vice that ever darkened your city, then tell to your fellows the true character of the man you serve. For two years he has had a defencible mansion concealed away among the ruins of some distant temple, and thither has he gone every month to visit her. She was beautiful, and he would make her his wife. But yet he had a wife living. The living wife must die to make way for one younger and more beautiful! It was for attempting to liberate the poor maiden from his fell power that I am suffering. But she is once more in his grasp—even now in his palace—and his Niao has died to give her room in his arms! Go tell the people the true character of their prince, and let them know what blackness dwells in his heart!"

Both the men had once or twice made a movement as though they would have stopped the youth from speaking, but they had suffered him to go on, for they seemed curious to know what he would say. When he ceased speaking they regarded each other for some moments in silence.

At length he with the rope and sack asked:

"Do you know where the prince kept this girl?"

"Yes," returned Paul. "It was in a secret place beneath the old temples of Fou-ching-yo."

The men looked at each other again, and then the one with the lantern spoke:

"Who guarded the place?"

"A eunuch named Fan-king, and a woman named Lan."

The fellows regarded each other again, and quick glances of intelligence passed between them.

"You will tell this to the people," said Paul. "When we are tired of life we'll tell it."

"When we are tired of life we'll tell it," said one of them, with a meaning motion of his head; "but as long as we wish to live I think we had better keep it to ourselves. By the great joss, my young fellow, that's a dangerous secret for a man to hold. 'But come, you must go with us now.'"

"Whither?" asked Paul, starting, as the dread idea came back to him.

"You shall see."

The men took him, one by each arm, and led him out from the cell. It was a narrow gallery upon which they now stood, and was guarded upon the outside by a low railing. Along this the men led the prisoner, and when they stopped it was before a stout door which seemed to open into the main part of the prison. Through this they passed, and then Paul found himself in a high vaulted apartment from the arched roof of which hung a single lantern. By a rough altar-like structure which was built on one side of the apartment stood two men. One of them was habited in the garb of a mandarin, and the other in the dark robes of a Buddhist priest. The men who led her stood before this altar, and the mandarin stepped down towards them. He gazed upon the youth some moments in silence.

"Young man," he at length said, "it grieves me to be obliged to perform the duty which a mighty power has imposed upon me."

"If it is a duty which refers to me," quickly returned Paul, utterly disguised with what he knew was heartless, false sympathy, "I beg that you will do it with as few words as possible."

The mandarin seemed for the moment to be nonplussed by this, but he soon recovered himself, and in a tone of unmistakable chagrin he resumed:

"There is a charge resting upon your shoulders which leads you to death. Your last hour on earth has come, and I hope you realize how richly you merit the fate. It only remains for me to vest the authority in these men who lead you, and they are now instructed to do with you as they have been directed. But before you die you may have the chance to ask the great Buddha to take your soul to himself and carry it to the skies. This priest will speak for you."

"I want nothing of your priest, nor of your Buddha," bitterly exclaimed the youth.

The bonze struck his hands upon his breast with holy horror, and the mandarin went back to the altar.

"In the God of justice and truth I have placed my trust," continued Paul, "and to him alone will I look for help. I ask none of your prayers nor any of your sympathy, for the one is heartless, and the other is false. I know my fate, and I am prepared."

The mandarin and the bonze were not a little surprised at the youth's manner, and after gazing upon him for some moments they turned and conversed together in low, inaudible tones. At length the former turned towards the man who held the lantern and handed him a small piece of parchment. Paul could see that the parchment bore written characters upon its face, and from one of the hieroglyphics which he noticed he made up his mind that it was a death-warrant!

"Come," said the fellow, as he rolled up the massive and placed it in his pocket. "We are ready now."

The mandarin went back and stood by the priest, and the two others led Paul from the place by a door nearly opposite to that through which he had entered. This led to a kind of open porch, and at a short distance further they came to a wide platform which was built out from the prison wall. Here they stopped. The youth looked over the edge of the firm and he saw a smooth, black surface, in the still depths of which dwelt the images of the bright stars that twinkled overhead. It was water! In the distance he could see the tall buildings which flanked the opposite side of the wide canal, and from the absence of all vessels he judged that this was not a place where interlopers were allowed. The cool air swept gratefully across his fevered brow, and the stars of heaven looked down smilingly upon him.

Paul Arden knew that he had been brought out here to die! He remembered the words which the juggler had spoken, and he looked around to see if there were any signs of his presence, but he saw none. Now that grim death stared him in the face he began to look for succor. He tried to hope that Yu-fu would keep his promise. He bent his ear to listen, but he could only hear the gentle ripple of the water as it struck upon the prison wall beneath the platform upon which he stood. He felt that he was all alone with the men of death!

"We are ready," said the man with the lantern. He blew out the light as he spoke, and set the lantern down.

It was not dark, for the heavens were clear, and the starlight was undimmed. The other man threw down the sack, and then uncoiled the rope which he carried. It was in several pieces, and as he separated them he hung them about his own neck. Once Paul tried to break from the grasp that held him and leap into the water, but he could not. One of the men kept a strong hand upon him, and they were watchful for any such movement. Had the youth been strong he would have struggled even to death, but his muscles were weak, and his nerves all unstrung.

As soon as the cords were cleared, Paul's arms were placed behind him and pinioned at the elbows. Then his ankles were lashed together, and next a strong cord was passed over his shoulders and from thence around the lashing of the feet, and this was drawn up until the chin and knees came together. The next movement was to take a heavy stone which lay near at hand and place it in the sack, and then the mouth of the capacious sack was held open by one of the men, while the other seized the bound youth and lifted him up in his arms.

"O, for the love of heaven," groaned Paul, "have mercy on me! Kill me at once, but do not leave me to such a death!"

But neither of the executioners spoke. They forced the prisoner into the sack, and then they began to tie up the mouth. With one last effort Paul cast his eyes up, and he saw the bright stars looking down upon him. He caught the last breath of heaven's pure air—he heard the last rattle of the element that was waiting to receive him, and then the mouth of the sack was closed. He heard the grating of the cord as it was drawn tight and tied, and then he felt himself moved along upon the plank. There was a moment's pause—a moment during which Paul prayed for the lost loved one—a moment in which he confided his own soul to God—and

then he felt himself lifted up. He was balanced there an instant, and then came the fall—a quick, sinking sensation—a shock—a splash—a rushing of disturbed waters—and then came the cold, dark chill of the watery grave!

CHAPTER XIX.

A PROMISE AND A DISCOVERY.

On the evening that Paul Arden last spent in his prison Yu-lu sat in the chamber which had been assigned to her use in the palace. She was not so utterly miserable as when we saw her last, for she had been praying for strength to support her, and she had in a measure succeeded. The hours she had passed with Paul Arden seemed more like a dream to her now than a reality, but she could not but grieve that she had awakened from it. She expected never to see Paul again, and she feared that he even now might be dead. There was one other thing besides prayer that had been calm, and that was the hope of re-joining Paul in heaven. She sat there upon a broad, soft couch, and near her sat her constant guardian, Lan. The apartment was only lighted by a single lamp, so that objects in the distance were somewhat obscure.

At length the door was opened and a female attendant entered the room, who informed the inmates that a priest was in waiting. The prince had engaged an old priest to converse with Yu-lu, to make her understand the enormity of the sin she had committed, and also to impress upon her mind a sense of the duty she owed to him as her lord and master. The priest himself dared not visit her much now, for his season of mourning had commenced, and he was surrounded by his sympathizing court. But the priest took his place, and he had already gained considerably upon the maiden's confidence.

Shortly after the messenger withdrew the priest entered. He was bent with age and infirmity, and it was with difficulty that he walked, even with the help of a stout staff. He motioned to Lan as he entered, and she at once withdrew, and after this he went and sat down by the maiden's side.

"How fares our sweet child this evening?" he asked, gazing most sharply and earnestly into her face.

Yu-lu gazed up into the old man's features, and a strange shade passed over her face, but she quickly answered:

"I am not happy, good father."

"And yet you have everything that men call happiness. What more could you ask?"

"For what call happiness—for that which I love. I love nothing here."

"You speak plainly."

"Because I speak the truth."

"And yet, my child, your love must be very strange. If I mistake not, you love the youth who took you from the power of the prince. Is it not so?"

"Ay, father."

"He is not of our country—he is of foreign blood. Can you love him better than even a prince of your own country?"

"So it is," murmured Yu-lu. "I found his heart pure and noble, and I loved him because I knew he loved me."

"But you will forget him now, my child."

The maiden bowed her head, and remained for some moments in silence. At length she spoke, and her words were very low and earnest.

"Most holy father," she said, "do not many of our people take their own lives?"

"Yes, Yu-lu."

"And do you think a person can be happy hereafter who does it?"

"That must depend upon why it is done. Sometimes the most noble martyrs die in that way."

"But suppose life were all a useless burden—suppose the future of earth were nothing but blackness and gloom?"

"Stop, child. You are supposing now an impossibility."

"No, no, I am not," quickly cried the maiden. "O, heaven knows my own fate is all I have pictured. All is dark and drear, and sorrow alone lies before me on earth!"

"Then you never heard of God?"

"Of God?" murmured Yu-lu, looking wonderingly up.

"Ay—of that Being who made us, and who holds us at his will. There may be such a thing yet as hope. You are young, and life is before you."

Yu-lu looked more searchingly into her companion's face, for there came something in his words that struck strangely upon her ears. She had never heard him speak so before. He had always spoken to her of the prince and of the duty she owed to him—but never of God, and of hope yet to come. A few moments she gazed and then she tremblingly laid her hand upon his arm.

"Sir," she whispered, "you are not the same priest who has been here before."

"Ah. Did you think I was?" he replied.

"Most surely I did. But he spoke not as you speak. Yet you dress the same, and your beard is the same."

"Yes, for the good old priest lent them both to me. He is a friend of mine. I saw him to-day, and he told me he was coming here this evening to see you, and after much persuasion I succeeded in gaining his permission to my coming in his place; so I have come."

"But who are you?" uttered the maiden, slightly startled by this revelation.

"One who knows you well, and of whom you are often heard. But do not be alarmed."

"And who are you?"

"My name is Ye-fu-hi."

"The Juggler of Nankin!" uttered Yu-lu, starting with a strange emotion.

"Yes, my sweet child, and I have come here to serve you if I can."

How quickly the beam that bears the scales in which the human heart is placed can be turned! In an instant the maiden's confidence was given to the strange man by her side, and, as if by magic, she forgot all the mistrust she had fostered towards him. She was not "catching at straws," either, for she felt a wonderful degree of confidence in the juggler's power, and an innate voice whispered to her soul that she could fully trust him.

"Are you afraid to trust me?" she asked, after he had waited to witness the effect of the revelation.

"No, no—O, no," she said, "for something tells me that you can help me."

"I could have helped you once before if you had not been frightened and fled from me; but I know not as I can blame you, for I know that many people who know me not shrink from my presence when they hear my name."

"I remember," murmured Yu-lu. "I remember it well. I had a companion then. She hesitated and trembled; but in a moment more she continued, though with a husky, tremulous tone, "Paul Arden was with me then. Do you know where he is?"

"Yes."

"And does he live?"

"Yes."

"O, heaven he praised! He lives!" She bowed her head and wept.

"Yes—he lives," added the juggler, "but he is in the power of the prince."

Yu-lu started up and seized the old man by the arm. Her tears had ceased flowing, and her eyes gleamed with a powerful light.

"You can help him, too," she said, speaking with the whole force of her devoted soul.

"I have promised him that I would try."

"Then you have seen him?"

"Yes, I visited him in his prison."

"And was he suffering much?"

"More on your account than on his own. Of his own troubles he seemed to think but little—he only suffered because you were not safe."

"O, Paul, Paul!" ejaculated the maiden, clasping her hands and lifting her eyes towards heaven, "you shall not trust in a heart that can forget its love. You will see him again—you will speak with him. O, tell him that I—no, I do not forget him—tell him that even now I will joyfully give up my life to think but little—he only suffered because you were not safe."

"O, Paul, Paul!" ejaculated the maiden, clasping her hands and lifting her eyes towards heaven, "you shall not trust in a heart that can forget its love. You will see him again—you will speak with him. O, tell him that I—no, I do not forget him—tell him that even now I will joyfully give up my life to think but little—he only suffered because you were not safe."

"Yes, I see him; and that I think there is no doubt. I will surely tell him all that you have said. He, poor silly fellow, would willingly die, I think, to save you, or to find you in the dim world beyond the grave, so I think I had better try and save you both, and in order to do this, I must have your aid. Let the rest of our interview for the present be business, for I have not long to stop. Now tell me if you know how long before the prince intends to marry you?"

"I cannot tell that, though from what I have heard him say, I should think he meant to do it very soon. But what is the law on this subject?"

"O, there is no law that can govern Kong-ti, for I do not suppose that he means to have a public marriage at present. He will only make you legally his wife, and that he can do by acknowledgment as soon as he pleases. Do you think he will trouble you before two weeks have expired?"

"O, no—I do not think he will."

"Then you will have no trouble, for before that time I shall be here again. But if he should attempt to force you to the union you must find some way to overcome it."

"O, sir," uttered Yu-lu, her face all beaming with hope, "if you can promise me assistance at the end of two weeks I will save myself until that time. I have some power yet. One word of love will bend the strong prince mightily. I know that he is with his passion for me. He thinks it is true love."

"And what would you term it?" asked the juggler.

"A base, withering, blighting passion. It has its home in the senses, and not in the soul—it is a part of the body, and not of the spirit—it is a passion which destroys life instead of saving it—works death instead of life, and misery instead of joy. It takes its life from the outward form of beauty, and when a few short years shall have shed their fronts upon that beauty and caused it to fade away, all the love will be gone. Niao was beautiful once—and the prince loved her. She grew old—and he forgot his love, for he never loved but with the passion of the sensualist. Alas, poor Niao!"

The juggler passed hard into the face of Yu-lu, and his dark eye sparkled with an intense fire. He stretched forth his hand and placed it upon her head, and in trembling accents he said:

"Sweet child, if I live you shall be saved. Have no fears—only remain free for two weeks. I shall see you again then—and then I can tell you more than at present. I had only feared that the prince would hasten this marriage. I must leave you now, or I may be discovered. Keep up a good heart, and trust in God, for to his blessed care I leave you."

The old man turned and moved towards the door, but Yu-lu suddenly sprang towards him and caught him by the arm.

"You will save Paul!" she whispered.

"So you may hope," returned the juggler. The maiden whispered her thanks, and having kissed him, which she held she allowed her strange visitor to depart.

Ye-fu-hi gathered the folds of his long robe about him, and having bent his tall form, and set his staff heavily upon the floor, he took his way into the upper hall, and down the broad staircase. It was now quite late in the evening, and as the lower hall was only lighted by a single lantern the place was not wholly free from gloom.

When the old man had gone about half way down the stairs he heard a door open below, and instinctively he crouched away into the shade of the high parapet that guarded the outside of the stairway. He saw a man come out into the hall whom he knew to be the prince, and he was followed by an old mandarin. They passed through the hall and went out into the upper court, and the juggler determined to follow them, for he had the best reasons for wishing to gain as much knowledge as possible respecting the grandee's movements; and so he glided down the stairs as quickly as possible, and on reaching the court he saw the prince and the mandarin just passing behind a clump of rose bushes that grew in front of a vine-covered arbor. He crept softly up and listened, and he plainly heard them speak.

"I have set upon to-night," said the prince.

"Just as your highness pleases," responded the mandarin.

"It is done at midnight, and be sure that it is done most secretly."

"It shall be as you say."

"Because," explained the prince, "if the English devils at Shanghai should know of it they might make us trouble. Set the two most faithful men you have to do the work."

"I have two just such men as you need. They hear nothing and know nothing but their duty."

"It is well. Go now, and have the business progressing. Back him in the prison chamber, and be sure that he has weight enough to keep him down. You understand?"

"Yes."

"Then here is the warrant; and now you may go off."

The mandarin walked towards the street, and the prince turned back into his own dwelling. The juggler waited until they had both gone from sight and hearing, and then he glided away from his hiding-place. He thanked God that he had learned the plan of the base grandee, for now he could have a hand himself at shaping the finale of the dark plot.

CHAPTER XX.

ANOTHER BREAK IN THE GRANDMAN'S PLOT.

COLDLY and terribly wrapped the icy food of young Arden's form, but yet he passed. He had not time enough left to know that he had not sunk, but that he was still swaying in the water. Strange! The stone was very heavy, and yet the sack went not to the bottom. Paul felt a movement. It was not down—it was upward! His body came in contact with something hard—it was not the prison wall, nor was it the bottom of the channel. Every man was already strung up in a strain—he must open his mouth and let the flood in upon his exhausted lungs, or the distended blood-vessels must burst. One gasp, and a strange sensation came over him. His face was cold as ice—the water settled away from his head, and the wet sack clung close to his cheeks and temples. He breathed—and it was fresh air that came to his lungs! Up—he moved—slowly and painfully, for his limbs were in contact with something that bristled them. He spoke not, and move he could not. At length his body was balanced, as though upon the edge of a plank, and in a moment more he felt himself laid upon a hard, solid resting-place. He knew that the mouth of the sack was being untied—that the top was drawn down—that the fresh air struck upon his face—and then he opened his eyes.

"Ah!" he heard some one whisper in his ear. "Speak softly. Are you alive?"

"Yes," returned Paul.

"Then make no noise."

It was Ye-fu-hi who spoke, and Paul felt more gratitude than he could express in words. Carefully the juggler drew the wet sack off, and then he cut the cords with which the youth was bound, and Paul felt himself free once more, and he stretched his limbs out with a grateful emotion. He found himself in a small boat, and on looking up he saw that he was directly beneath the platform from which he had been thrown.

"Do not speak," whispered the juggler, "for we may not yet be out of danger. Remain perfectly quiet, and we will soon escape from this."

Paul's mind was clear, and he comprehended all that had transpired. He knew that Ye-fu-hi must have been beneath the platform all the while, and caught him the moment he touched the water, which the darkness would enable him to do without being detected by those overhead. He listened attentively but he could hear no sound above him.

"Are you not gone?" he asked, in an undertone. "I can hear no sound."

"Yes—they have gone in, but they may come again. See, through that crevice, there is a ray of light. We will wait until that is gone."

Paul looked in the direction pointed out, and he saw through one of the cracks of the platform now a crevice in the door beyond through which he had been let. Both of them watched the place, but four men came and opened, and some three or four men came out and looked over the edge of the platform. One whom Paul recognized as the old mandarin spoke:

"The water is all quiet," he said.

"Ay," answered the bonze, "and so must the fish know by this time."

"He will not tell his marvelous story again," said one of the attendants. "By the gilded joys, but his tongue did bear a strange story upon its point. I knew 'twas strange, though I could not understand it."

"I think our work is done," added the second executioner.

"Yes," said the mandarin. "All is quiet and safe. The fishes will dispose of him now. Your work is done, and I will report it to our princely master. There is no need that we should waste much time here, so we will with the departed one a safe journey on his dark road, and then be off to our homes."

There seemed to be a general assent to this proposition, and then all four of the men went back into the building and closed the door after them. It was not long after this before the light disappeared, and after waiting a reasonable time, makes security doubly sure, Ye-fu-hi pushed his boat slowly and noiselessly out from beneath the platform. He did not venture out into the channel for a long distance, but he kept within the shade of the high walls that flanked the water, and pushed his boat along with his hands. At length, however, he came to a place where the shore was open, and taking a broad-bladed paddle from the thwart he paddled out into the stream, and ere long they approached the moorings of the junks. Still the light went on, nor did the juggler stop until he had reached a landing some two miles distant from the prison.

"We may land here," he said, as he reached forth and seized hold upon a ring which hung from an iron-work post.

The boat was close in to the stairs, and the juggler got out first, and then assisted Paul. After this the boat was made fast, and then the old man led the way up towards the town.

By the dim starlight, and by the still more dim light of the dusky lanterns that hung at the street corners, our hero could see that he was in that part of the city which was mostly in ruins, and where he entered the first street beyond the head of the long canal he found that it was literally filled with dirt and rubbish.

"Never mind," said Ye-fu-hi, as he picked his way over the thickly disposed obstacles, "this is not so bad but that it might be worse. It is surely better than lying at the bottom of the canal."

"Surely it is," uttered the youth, treading lightly over the rubbish, and forgetting all his pains. "Two hours ago I could not even have hoped for life, but now I feel that I am safe."

"You will be safe if you do not repeat your wild freak of running away from me; but if you choose to try that again I cannot answer for your safety."

"Ah, there is no danger of that," murmured Paul. "But," he added, in a sad tone, "I am not now where I was then. I promised to try and save her from the fate that threatens her. I suppose your questions will soon reach that point, and I will anticipate you. I found the fair maiden well, but she was suffering much through fear. I consoled her, however, and when I left her she was comparatively happy. Her heart is all your own, and her greatest suffering has been on your account. If you had been killed she would not have taken her own life, but she might have followed you. Such love as that is rare."

"O, Yu-lu—Yu-lu—bright, blessed being—Heaven bless you ever!" fervently ejaculated the youth, clasping his hands, and raising his eyes towards heaven. Big tears rolled down his cheeks, and his bosom heaved with a wild emotion. He arose to his feet and moved to the old man's side, and on the next instant he was upon his knees.

"Ye-fu-hi," he said, clasping the juggler's knees, "tell me what of hope I have. O, if you can save poor Yu-lu, God will bless you in the act. If you can gain admittance to the palace why can you not bring her forth from the prison?"

"That were now impossible," returned the old man, with tears in his eyes. "But get up from your knees. You need not ask of me any favors, for I will do all in my power without the asking. It was in the disguise of a priest that I gained entrance to the maiden, but I could not have brought her away. She is watched most narrowly, and every avenue leading to the palace is strictly watched. No, Paul, there is no hope of getting her away by force or stratagem, and yet I have undertaken the task. She is to remain in the palace two weeks, or nearly that, and you had better stay here during the same time. Old Lin is a good man, and he will be faithful. He knows enough of your case to appreciate your situation, and you need have no fears of trusting yourself to him. Of course there can be no terms for so long a stay, but you must expect yourself for those who would wish to do you harm feel sure that you are past searching for. Now will you stay here until you see me again?"

The youth hesitated.

"Remember all the circumstances," added Ye-fu-hi. "In two weeks I will warrant your safety, but it might not be safe to expose yourself now. Will you remain here?"

"I will," said Paul.

"Then you are safe. Here you will have everything you can want, and all your comforts will be cared for. If I do not return as soon as two weeks you may know that I am no longer my own master, and under those circumstances you can do as you think fit, but until the expiration of that time you will remain here."

Paul was too grateful for the already received to make himself impatient by asking too many questions, and after arrangements were made with Lin, the juggler took his departure. It cannot be denied that the youth was all gratitude and thanks, but, strange as it may appear, no sooner was the wonderful man gone than our hero began to distrust him again. Perhaps it was not really distrust, it might better be said that he tried to study up grounds for distrust. In truth he could not fathom the man, and it was not his nature to accept with faith that which baffled his comprehension. Yet he resolved this time to keep his promise. The more he saw of old Lin the better he liked him, and after a few days of living beneath his roof he felt quite at home. He did not move out from the house, even to the garden, for he was content for this time that if trouble came it should not be laid to his charge.

known. Something whispered it to his belief that Ye-fu-hi was more than he appeared, for his every look and motion betokened a conscious power which springs only from legitimate inheritance. Yet Paul gathered no light from his surmises. He only bated his mind awhile, and then rested just where he began.

At the expiration of some fifteen minutes the juggler returned, and in his hands he brought dry clothing. Paul quickly divested himself of his wet garments, and when he had put on the dry ones Lin brought in food and drink, and having satisfied himself that nothing more would be wanted, he withdrew, leaving the youth and Ye-fu-hi alone together. Paul looked up from his food and found the eyes of his strange companion fixed keenly upon him, and in spite of his assurance to the contrary of fear he could not repress a slight shudder. There was something in those eyes so dark and piercing, and their light was so deep and powerful, that they seemed to be penetrating his very soul.

"Paul Arden," the old man said, as the youth looked up at him for the fourth time, "I suppose you have wondered ere this how I happened to be so opportunely at hand to save you from death, and to save you the trouble of needless questions I will tell you all about it, if you would like to know."

"I should like to know," returned our hero, "for I have wondered, as you surmise."

"There was much of chance in your escape to-night," commenced the juggler. "For though I had determined to watch for your safety, yet I was not looking for your death so soon by some days, at least. I chanced to be at the palace of Prince Kong-ti, and I overheard him conversing with one of his mandarins. I heard just enough to convince me that you were to be placed in the sack and drowned, and I knew that the job would be done from the platform back of the prison, so I hastened away and took a boat, and having reached the prison I stationed myself beneath the plank staging, and there awaited the result. I heard them when they came out with you, and I watched for your descent. The moment you touched the water I seized the stout cord that confined the mouth of the sack, and having allowed you to sink out of sight I drew you carefully under the staging. You of course knew the rest."

"Yes," murmured the youth, with a shudder. "But," he added, after a few moments of thought, "you spoke of being at the palace of the prince. Did you learn if Yu-lu was there?"

"Yes, I saw her."

"Saw her?" repeated Paul, starting from his seat. "And did you speak with her?"

"Yes, and I promised to try and save her from the fate that threatens her. I suppose your questions will soon reach that point, and I will anticipate you. I found the fair maiden well, but she was suffering much through fear. I consoled her, however, and when I left her she was comparatively happy. Her heart is all your own, and her greatest suffering has been on your account. If you had been killed she would not have taken her own life, but she might have followed you. Such love as that is rare."

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Time passed on, and Paul Arden grew more and more anxious. The name of Yu-lu was often upon his lips, and the dark, strange face of the juggler was often in his mind. Hope may not have grown any brighter, but his prayers were at least more fervent.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE GRANDMAN'S PLOT IS ABOUT FINISHED.

DAT after day crept away, and Yu-lu remained beneath the roof of the Prince Kong-ti. She suffered some from his presence, and she suffered some through fear, for lately he had intimated that she was very soon to become his wife. The two weeks set apart by Ye-fu-hi had nearly drawn to a close when, late one evening, Yu-lu sat alone in her chamber. Lin had retired, and she was now asleep in an adjoining room, and the maiden was left to seek her rest when she pleased, but she had not yet found her couch, for she knew that she could not sleep, so she chose to remain up and commune with her own thoughts. She had been thus alone over an hour when she was startled by the sound of stealthy footsteps near her. She started up and listened, and she was sure that the sound came from one of the apartments upon her right. But what could any one be doing there? How could any one have got there? Those were the private apartments of the dead princess, and they were now closed, and no one allowed to enter them.

Yu-lu bent eagerly forward, and she was sure she heard the sound of feet there, and she also heard the opening of a door. Her eyes were fixed upon the silk-covered wall, and she saw a door open where she had never known there to be a door. It was opened slowly and noiselessly, and on the next moment a female form glided into the chamber. It was a female robed all in white, and Yu-lu sank back upon her couch and covered her face with her hands.

"Lady," spoke the mysterious presence, in a soft, sweet voice, "wherever you be, do not speak aloud nor cry out, for I have come to save you."

"You have come from Ye-fu-hi," said Yu-lu, reassured in a moment.

"No—I have come from Paul Arden."

A quick, low cry broke from the maiden's lips, and she darted forward and caught her visitor by the arm.

"You are not deceiving me?" she said.

"No. I speak the truth."

"You can not lead me from this palace?"

"Yes, I can lead you by ways which his thought does not guard. But tell me first if there is danger of her being interrupted here?"

"No, not if we are silent," returned Yu-lu.

The new-comer removed the white craps from her head, and the maiden saw her pale, pale features. She clasped her hands upon her bosom, and a groan burst from her lips.

"Not dead!" she whispered.

"Then you know me?"

"I have seen a picture hanging upon the wall in the next room. Are you not Niao?"

"Yes. I am, the prince's own wife—Kong-ti's own wife; and I have come to take you away from here."

As soon as Yu-lu could overcome the wild emotions that raged through her soul at this astounding discovery, she laid her trembling hand upon the arm of the princess, and then pillored her head upon her bosom.

"Ah," murmured Niao, as she felt the maiden's head resting upon her, "I do not wonder that Kong-ti loved you, but he shall not so wrong you as to tear your heart in sunder."

"And you will save me—you will lead me out from this place—you will carry me to Paul's presence?"

"Yes, sweet maiden."

"How can you know Paul? how is it that you live here?"

"Stop," interrupted the princess. "I know all this must seem very strange to you, but I can explain it. And thereupon she went on and related to Yu-lu all that had transpired in the dwelling upon the distant marsh, and of her escape from that place with her faithful Tai, and she also told her of the prince's death, and of her death by drowning, and placed it where the prince would be sure to receive it. "For a long time," continued Niao, "we remained in the house of an honest peasant in perfect safety. At length I heard that you had been brought to the palace—Tai learned it from some confidential source—and I resolved to come and save you, even if I had to expose myself. It was dangerous to do this, for I knew of entrance to the people's truth of his character. So Tai and myself started for the city, and we arrived last evening. We entered at one of the lower gates, and shortly after we had reached the first street we were met by a runaway horse. Tai sprang forward to save me, and in so doing she was knocked down, and had one of her arms broken. I saw a narrow alley, or court, near at hand, and into that I assisted my unfortunate attendant. I went up the court because I wished to find a house somewhat retired, and I was fortunate enough to find such an one. It was inhabited by an old man named Lin, and he freely gave us welcome. This morning I found that there was also a young man in the house, and by degrees we found out each other's characters. Old Lin suggested me, and that probably helped on the matter. I found that youth to be named Paul Arden, and when he knew me he fell upon his knees and told me the whole story of his love for you, and also the story of his escape from the clutches of the cruel prince. It was he who told us how you suffered here, and I promised him that I would bring you to him. I knew that I could do this, for I knew of entrance to my own apartments in the palace which would not be guarded, and I had no doubt that I should be able to reach you. So I have come. You shall go with me, and when you are safe with the man you love, then I will return and confront that man who is my husband."

Yu-lu placed her arms about the neck of the princess, and she wept for a while, then she wept together, but they soon started up, for they knew that time was precious. The maiden hurried on such garments as she could command,

and in a few moments she was ready. Nio led the way through the same secret door by which she had entered, and having closed this behind her without noise, she glided across the floor of her own room and gained a narrow corridor which led around to the artificial garden which had been built upon a platform raised on a level with the chamber windows. Into this garden they entered, and from thence they went by a flight of stairs into a sort of aviary which had been closed for the past two weeks. From here the princess went into the lower garden, and crossing over to the back side she found a postern which led to the bank of one of the canals. This postern she opened with a key which she carried in her pocket, and when that was passed they were clear of the palace grounds.

The females had taken but a few steps from the wall when they thought they heard loud voices from the palace, and on turning they saw lights flashing from the windows of the apartments which had just left.

"Those lights are in my rooms," said the princess.

"Then my escape must have been discovered," uttered Yu-lu, trembling like an aspen.

"Never mind," returned Nio. "Let us hurry on. The way is direct, and I can lead it straight. Courage, now, and keep close by me. Once beneath Lin's roof and you are free, for my presence will act as a charm over you."

With quick steps the women hastened on. Several times they heard steps behind them, and once Yu-lu was sure she heard the voice of the prince, but she failed not. The presence of the princess was a tower of strength to her soul, and with hope bright-winded before her she hastened on through the deserted streets. They felt sure they were followed, but perhaps the followers were not after them. At length the princess turned up into the narrow court and hurried on beyond the angle of the wall till she came to the low door of old Lin. Here she stopped and knocked, and the host himself answered the call. The females entered, and with a wily beating heart Yu-lu followed her conductor into the small room towards which Lin had pointed. She passed the door—and she saw a human form moving towards her. A wild thrill shot through her frame—a dizzy blindness overcame her, and she could fairly comprehend objects about her, she felt a pair of strong arms encircling her—a kiss upon her upturned brow—a soft, sweet whisper in her ear, and a warm tread upon her cheek.

Gradually Yu-lu came back to the sphere of mental life, and she found herself resting upon the bosom of Paul Arden. A low, wild cry of joy broke from her lips, and she returned the embrace with all the energy of her soul. There was no need that they should tell more of their love, for every look and action spoke more than words could convey—and then they had heard from each other's love, even since they had been separated. With those two hearts it was a season when the tongue fails of doing duty to the heart—when the soul is frantic with the delicious joy, and words would only clog the understanding.

The princess gazed upon the scene, and she fairly wept with sympathizing joy. She forgot for the time her own misfortunes, and only dwelt upon the happiness she had been the means of promoting in others.

But this scene was to be broken in upon. Paul had just led Yu-lu to a seat, and was bending his knee to the kind princess, when there came the sound of feet upon the plank walk in front of the dwelling, and in a moment more the front door was thrown open with a crash. Paul started to his feet and instinctively moved to Yu-lu's side, and on the next instant the door of their room was opened, and the Prince Kong-ti, followed by Li, entered the room.

The grandeur of the eyes fell first upon Yu-lu, and he had taken one step towards her when he saw Paul. He stopped, and for a moment the color died from his face.

"What!" he at length exclaimed, starting back a pace. "You alive, and here! By the powers of heaven, there's been falsehood here, or else you have the powers of darkness to help you!"

"Not so, last man," quickly returned Paul, for he felt at that moment a strange assurance. "It was the power of heaven itself that freed me from the death you had prepared for me."

"Then, by heavens! the next time you will call upon your power in vain, for I'll see the deed done myself. Look to me, Li! while I secure this fly-away from me. Ah! my fair Yu-lu, you shall repent sorely of this."

He had advanced a single step towards the frightened maiden when he suddenly stopped and turned pale as death. His eyes had rested upon the pale face of the princess! His knees knocked together like reeds, and he laid his hand upon the back of a chair for support.

"You—you—here!" he gasped.

"Yes, Kong-ti," replied the wife, trembling fearfully, but yet maintaining herself with firmness.

"Does death haunt me here with its own subjects! Has the grave been opened to play the fool with me?"

"No, my lord. I have not yet returned in the grave. But had deception I practised upon you, and I never intended to see you again; but I heard that you had laid your foul hands upon a fair young maiden, and I resolved to come forth and save her, and punish yourself. O, my husband, I know your heart—I know how you would have rid yourself of my presence—I know of your secret visits to my chamber in that distant dwelling—and I know what you did there!"

"Stop! stop!" shouted the prince. "Speak no more words, and I'll cleave you where you stand! Your fate is fixed; and let me assure you that no power on earth can thwart me in my purpose. I am not to be made the toy of lying women."

"Ho, my master—some one is approaching," cried Li.

"Then let them approach!" exclaimed the prince, "for by the imperial crown there is not a soul in Nankin darest cross my path!"

"But they have stopped near the door, and there are many of them."

"Then go to the outer door and tell them that the prince is here, and that he bids them disperse. It may be some of my guard who noticed my abrupt departure, and have come to protect me."

CHAPTER XXII.

CONCLUSION.

Li moved towards the door, but, before he reached it, it was thrown open, and a tall, stout man, habited in the rich garb of a British officer, strode into the apartments, and he was followed by half-a-dozen others, all of them officers, and wearing the same talismanic dress. One of them Paul noticed as Lord Archibald Sumpter, and sprang quickly towards him extended his hand.

"How now!" exclaimed the tall man who had first entered, speaking the purest Chinese, "Are you here, Kong-ti?"

But the prince made no answer. He was thunderstruck at this wonderful presence, and his assurance all left him on the instant. He knew English power, for his own emperor had been forced to bow to it.

"And you, too, fair maiden—you here!" continued the leader of the Britons.

Paul recognized that voice, and quickly leaving Lord Sumpter's side he approached the strange man; but Yu-lu was ahead of him, for with a bewildered look she gazed up into his face, and then she murmured:

"I am not deceived—Ye-fo-ki!"

"THE JUGGLER OF NANKIN!" gasped the prince.

"Yes, my noble prince," returned he whom we have known as the juggler, with a look and tone of the most inflexible scorn, "I have been long known as the juggler of Nankin, but you may know me now as Lord William Buxton."

"Buxton!" uttered Paul, hardly able to credit the evidence of his own senses. "Lord William? Then I did not see you dead in the coffin at Hong Kong?"

"No, Paul," said Lord William, extending his hand and smiling. "That was my poor servant whom you saw there—or rather he was in the coffin, for I think the lid was not raised to show his mangled face."

"No—it was not. But yet people all said 'twas Sir William, who lay there." Paul gazed wonderingly upon the nobleman's face as he spoke, and he was startled at the change which had taken place there. To be sure the features were still dark from long exposure, but the long braided moustache was gone, and the graceful, glossy curls of a well-fitting wig waved about his neck and temples. Then that noble dress possessed in itself a wonderful power of change.

"Yu-lu," spoke Sir William, approaching the trembling maiden and extending his hands. There were tears in his eyes as he spoke, and he trembled at every joint. The fair girl instinctively put forth her hands, and they rested in his. "Yu-lu," he repeated, the big tears rolling faster and faster down his cheeks, "did you ever feel that this hand could be your true home?"

"O, no, no!" she quickly cried; and as she did so she shook her head back from her face and gazed up at the strange man with a look of almost painful intensity.

"Did you ever feel that you were of the same blood with those who have brought you up from infancy?" continued he, looking into her face all the while, and still holding the maiden by both her hands.

Yu-lu disengaged one of her hands and pressed it hard upon her throbbing, aching brow. "Sir William," she slowly murmured to herself. "Lord Buxton," she added, still pondering deeply.

"CORA!" whispered the old man, in a deep, thrilling tone, again taking both her hands. "CORA!" he repeated, drawing her nearer to him.

The maiden started up from her pondering thoughts, and with a wild cry she uttered:

"So I was called once! and that same voice used to speak to me in my father's face all these years! What does it mean?"

"CORA, rest upon this bosom, for it was here you rested in infancy! Come to these arms, for they encircled you the day that you were born. Repose against my heart, for the blood that courses there is the fount from which your own life sprang!"

The maiden bowed her head, and it rested upon his. When she looked up, and whispered, "MY FATHER!" Then Sir William pressed her more fondly within his stout arms, and with a holy, hazy light irradiating his features, he murmured:

"Heaven at last is opened, and my child—my angel child is restored to me. Yes, sweet one, you are not deceived. I am your father—your own true sire, and Heaven itself whispers the truth to your heart."

It would be hard to tell which of the spectators were the most affected by this strange scene. The princess seemed to feel only a calm, deep joy, as she stood with her hands clasped upon her bosom, and gazed with tearful eyes upon the father and child. Paul Arden was wonder-struck, but his wonder was not sufficient to keep back his tears. The prince Kong-ti gazed upon the scene with a mixture of strange, wild emotions, for he had thought that turned inward upon his own soul. Yet he was the first to speak:

"By the dark spirits of the pit," he uttered, with his face all livid with mingled fear and rage, "I do not believe this marvellous tale; but I make you little what you believe," returned the British nobleman, with darkly flashing eyes, "but for the sake of satisfying your wife, and, perhaps, yourself, I will explain the whole matter. It is now about seventeen years since I had difficulty at Canton with one of the wealthy merchants in that place. He cheated me most shamefully, and as I could gain no redress by law, I chastised him with my own hands. A few nights afterwards I had business with one of the ships in the harbor which detained me until morning, and when I returned to my dwelling at the

factories I found that my wife and child had been stolen away from me! I gained entrance into the city, and the victory gave me some assistance in my search. One week afterwards my wife came back to me, but she brought not the child. She told me that about the middle of the night on which I was gone, three men had come to her chamber, and gagged and bound her, and then dragged her away, but the child was not carried with her, nor had she seen it. She had begged to have it brought to her, but her captors pretended to know nothing of it. She made her escape, but could not find her child. Our darling Cora was gone, and though I knew well that the dishonest merchant had done the deed out of revenge for the punishment I had inflicted upon him, yet I could not prove it. The sad blow proved too much for my wife, and she died—and I was left alone!

"Some years afterwards I was sent for to attend at the bedside of a dying man, and I went. It was the merchant who had sent for me, and he confessed that it was himself who had stolen away my child, and he desired, before he died, to make all the reparation in his power. He told me where he had sent the child, and also gave me the assurance that she had been cared for and beloved by the family into whose hands she had fallen. As soon as I left the merchant's house I hastened to my own quarters, and having taken one of my servants to accompany me I set out on my mission. It seems that on the very day I set forth there occurred a series of disasters at the factories between the Chinese and English, in which a number of the natives were killed. It soon became known that I had gone out into the country, and a party of excited Chinese set out after me. They overtook me and my companion in a secluded spot, and at once set upon us. My servant was killed, but I managed to make my escape. I afterwards learned that the assassins supposed they had killed me, and that having mutilated the body in a most shocking manner, they sent it to the factories. It also learned that my own countrymen supposed the body to be mine, and had buried it accordingly.

"I had found that my child had been removed from the place where she had been living, and that she had been taken a great distance to the northward. I was determined to seek her at all hazards, and as I felt it to be unsafe for an Englishman to travel about the country, I allowed the people at Canton and Hong Kong to suppose that I was really dead, and then I assumed the disguise I have since worn. I shaved my head, and painted my eyebrows. I spoke the Chinese language quite fluently, but to hide what proper intention I lacked, I assumed an impediment of speech that effectively kept all the rest. I learned jugglers' tricks, purchased jugglers' implements, and then set out. I hailed from Nankin, and in Nankin I have spent much of my time. And so I travelled in search of my lost child. It was all I had on earth of treasure, and I set my life at forfeit in the enterprise. At length, after years of search, I got track of her, and I found a man who had acted as her uncle, and who really supposed he was her uncle, supporting her to have been the natural child of a dead brother. I had now scarcely conquered the peculiar intonations of the language that I threw off my impediment, and none suspected me.

"I hung upon this supposed uncle, for I knew that the girl who had been with me was my own Cora, but it was a long while before he would tell me the truth. At length, however, he confessed that he had sold her to the Prince of Nankin. Then I sat my watch upon the palace, and for months I hung about the place like a spectre, but it was only to find in the end that my child was not there. Next I noticed the journeys of the prince to the westward, and I turned my attention thitherward. I followed him several times, but lost him before he got to his journey's end. But I have found him now, and I have found my child, too. Ah, Cora, I think you will never see me again. Now you, Paul, either."

As Sir William closed his narrative his daughter once more rested upon his bosom, and this time Paul Arden came to his side and took his hand.

"Here, Paul," said Buxton, at the same time passing the hand of his sweet child over to his keeping, "you take charge of her for a while." And then turning to the prince he said, while the fire flashed in his dark eyes:

"Now, Prince of Nankin, I have but a word more to say to you. Behold here, only a few days, lies an English frigate. Her guns are all shot, and her men are at their quarters, and for the while they are under my command. You have laid hands upon a British subject who has broken no law of your empire. I demand the person of Paul Arden to carry back with me, and of course I shall take my child. What say you?"

The prince started to his feet, and for a moment his hands were clasped nervously together. Then his eyes rested upon his Yu-lu—and then upon his wife—and then, with a deep groan, he sank back.

"Go," he said, "only never let me see your faces more."

"One word more I would speak," resumed Sir William. "There are men in the city who know how you have treated your own wife. If you take her back, and treat her well, they will be silent of the past, but if you repeat not they will give the story of your infamy to the wind, and the whole empire shall know it. I have no more to say."

The gentle maiden glided to the side of the princess and wound her arms about her neck and kissed her, and in a low whisper she thanked and blessed her. Then she returned to her father, and ere long afterwards she was once more in the open street. In half an hour more she was upon the waters of the broad, deep river, and with a strangely beating heart she bade adieu to the great city of Nankin forever. She drew more closely to her father's side, but yet one of her hands reposed within the warm grasp of Paul Arden.

In one month from the time of the scenes just recorded, there was a marriage ceremony on

board a noble British frigate, and Paul Arden was the happy man who gained the wife. It was the blushing Yu-lu—the Cora who had been lost and found—that gave him her heart for ever, while the proud and happy father gave him her hand.

"Now for home!" cried Sir William, after the joyous deed was done. "Once more for Old England!"

And so the cry went through the noble ship—pealing forth from noble hearts—"Once more for Old England!"

Just as the anchor was speck the deafening roar of gongs and drums came from the shore, and the Chinese flags upon the war-junks were lowered. Shortly afterwards a boat came off with the pinner.

"What's to pay now?" asked Sir William Buxton.

"News has just come down that the Prince of Nankin is dead!" replied the pinner.

Sir William turned away and joined his children, and to them he told the news he had heard.

"Dead!" murmured Cora, looking up with a moistened eye. "O, what a sad end must his have been. But he had my forgiveness, and I pray that God may be merciful to him. He will need mercy, for justice would be terrible."

Paul made no reply, for at that moment his thoughts were not such as could be expressed in words.

THE END.

(Written for The Flag of our Union.)

PETER PLUNKET'S JOURNEY.

A TALE OF MODERN NECROMANCY.

BY HORATIO ALGER, JR.

PETER PLUNKET was an industrious cordwainer, who not many years since was wont to ply with commendable assiduity St. Crispin's favorite art in the flourishing city of Portland. He was always up with the sun, and generally retired soon after that luminary. Peter was a bachelor, but a merry one at that, as was evinced by the songs with which he was accustomed to alleviate his hours of labor. It may be supposed that there was little of romance or poetry about Peter's occupation. This is very true, but for all that, Peter lived in a world of romance, the creation of his own fancy, which quite lifted him above the practical prose of his everyday life. Let me explain.

In the days of his youth, at one of those mile stones on the road of life, which are wont to turn bright, Peter had received from a relative, as a gift, that wonderful volume, the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. It is needless to say with what avidity Peter devoured its contents—how profoundly he was impressed with the story of the Forty Thieves, and the accounts given of Haroun Al Raschid, the sagacious caliph of Bagdad. Henceforth a new world was opened to his view, the life of which he had never imagined. The impression produced by the first person, instead of fading gradually away, only increased in strength and intensity. All these marvellous stories Peter Plunket received with unshaken faith. Never did Mussulman repose with more implicit confidence on the Koran than he on the Arabian Nights. He would accompany Sinbad the sailor on his voyages, with a feeling of anxious suspense which was happily dissipated by the fortunate result, for our Arabian chroniclers were not ignorant of the true art of story-writing, which is embodied in the old familiar proverb—"All's well that ends well."

Perhaps the story with which Peter was most impressed was that of the Arabian prince who went to sleep in Bagdad, and found himself at break of day standing beneath the walls of Damascus. Now Peter was nothing of a traveller. He had never been ten miles from Portland, where he was born and bred, but there is no one who has not at times the desire to see something of the world, and Peter thought if he could only engage the services of a genius or fairy, it would be a most agreeable undertaking, since it would not only save expense, but time also. He ventured to express this opinion one day in the presence of a wagish neighbor, who was well aware of Peter's idiosyncrasy.

"But how do you know," said he, with assumed gravity, "that there are no genii in these days? For my part, I see no reason why they should not still exist."

"But you never heard of any? You have never seen any?" inquired Peter, simply.

"Why, no, but still they may exist, but be prevented by some superior power from taking part in mortal affairs."

Peter admitted that this might be so.

"I only wish that some one would take it into his head to meddle with my affairs," he continued.

"What would you wish?"

"I would wish to be transported to Boston." Peter had a great reverence for Boston, and any one who had there passed in his eyes for a great traveller.

After a little more desultory conversation, Peter Plunket's visitor, deposed, he had, however, formed in his own mind a plan for carrying out Peter's wish, leaving him to suppose that it was effected by supernatural means. It so happened that he was himself summoned by business to Boston, and had made arrangements to start in the steamer at 7 P. M. the next day.

He accordingly invited Peter to an early call at his residence, and, while there, contrived to infuse into his cup a strong soporific, the effects of which would be dissipated for eighteen hours or thereabouts. The potion took effect in a very short time, and Peter fell asleep.

A carriage was summoned, and Henry Tappan, aided by his servant who was in the secret, got Peter into it. At the last he hastily represented himself as a physician, and the person laid in charge as a patient, whom for medical purposes he had thrown into an artificial sleep. He secured a state-room in which he deposited his patient.

Early the next morning the party arrived in Boston, where the same arrangement as before was adopted. A carriage conveyed the party to the Revere House, where Peter was at once carried into a chamber and placed in bed. It was very early, and Peter had several hours to sleep. Meanwhile, Henry Tappan, who wished wholly to conceal the agency he had in the affair, and so more thoroughly blind Peter, proceeded to the Tremont House, where he registered his name, and then proceeded to carry out the business which had called him to the city.

Let us return to Peter Plunket.

At eleven o'clock in the forenoon, eighteen hours having elapsed, the potion began gradually to lose its power, and Peter arose in bed with disordered faculties, and half unconscious of his situation. The first object which arrested his attention was the full flood of sunlight which was streaming in at the window.

"Good heavens!" thought he, "how I have overleaped myself. It must be nearly noon!" Then for the first time he noticed that he was already dressed.

"Is it possible," thought he, "that I went to bed with my clothes on?" He looked around him.

"Where am I?" he exclaimed, in deep perplexity. "This is not my own room; and this," going to the window, from which he surveyed Boston spread out before him, "surely this cannot be Portland!" He sat down in the deepest embarrassment, and began to ponder on his situation.

"The last I can remember," thought he, "Mr. Tappan invited me to his house, but whether I went or not, I don't recollect. It can't be that I have suddenly grown crazy, and that this is a mad-house!"

The idea was terrific, but was quickly dissipated by a letter of which he caught sight lying on the table, directed in a large, bold hand, to Peter Plunket. He hastily broke it open, and read with an indescribable feeling of awe, these words:

"MORTAL!—Tis thus expressed the wish to be borne by supernatural power to the city of Boston. That request I have heard, and since thou art a true believer in that at which many men incredulously scoff, I have for once violated my determination not to interfere in mortal affairs, and have done as you desired. You are now in Boston, at the hotel called Revere. To carry you back is not permitted me, but in the purse which I have placed in your pocket, you will find sufficient money from the golden treasures of the king of the enchanted isles to defray your expenses at the hotel, and carry you back to Portland. One warning I must give you. Divulge not to any man the manner in which you were brought thither. If you transgress this prohibition, you will find that moment be transformed into a ghost. Be warned! Be watchful!"

EUCHAMUS.

The Genius of Sleep.

A sensation of awe came over Peter Plunket, thrilling even to his finger's ends. He placed his hand into his pocket, and drew out a purse which proved to contain six quarter eagles.

"From the golden treasures of the king of the enchanted isles," repeated Peter Plunket to himself, as he surveyed the pieces with a curious gaze.

Peter was by this time ready to go down stairs. After blundering about in the entries, he at length found his way down. His long fast having produced a feeling of hunger, he partook of a hearty meal, and went out into the streets. Almost the first person he met was Henry Tappan, who had been watching in the neighborhood for some time.

"Good heavens! Mr. Plunket!" he exclaimed, in affected astonishment, "what brought you here? You did not tell me you were coming!"

"I did not know myself," said Peter. "I was brought—"

He was about to reveal the secret, when the thought of the fearful prohibition flashed across his mind. The narrow escape he had had from the threatened transformation turned him pale with apprehension.

"Good heavens! What makes you so pale?" inquired Henry Tappan.

"Nothing at all. A sudden pain in my side," blundered Peter.

"Did you come by the cars or steamer?" pursued Tappan.

This question was a difficult one to answer.

"By the cars, I believe."

"What hour did you start?"

"I—I didn't start—at least, I didn't look to see," said Peter, growing red with confusion.

"When do you think of returning? I suppose when you have completed your business."

"I have no business to transact."

"O, I understand. You came to see the city. Well, as I have been here frequently, and know more about it than you do, I will serve as your guide. I shall return to-morrow morning. Perhaps you will be ready as the same time."

Tappan chaperoned Peter about the city, showing him the principal objects worthy of observation. Peter wandered round in a maze of wonder, hardly knowing whether he was not in a land of enchantment after all, and his companion a genius who had assumed a mortal form the more readily to deceive him. The next morning they started homeward, this time in the cars, and they reached Portland in safety after a pleasant ride of five hours.

Since that time, Peter Plunket believes even more strongly than before in the truth of the Arabian Nights. He looks upon himself as a privileged mortal, the confidant of that wonderful power who figure so prominently in its charmed pages—his only fear is, lest in some unguarded moment he shall betray the mighty secret, of which he is the sole depository, and thus incur the fearful penalty annexed to the revelation. The purse, with the remainder of its contents, for he did not spend the whole, he guards with religious care, alone from the gaze of a multitude. As for Henry Tappan, he exults in the success of his practical joke, which he considers cheaply attained at the price which it cost him.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]
THERE'S SORROW IN MY HEART.

BY HORACE G. BOGDANIAN.

O, there is sorrow in my heart,
A cloud upon my brow;
And many sad and mournful thoughts
Hang over my forehead now.
There are no bright and fragrant flowers
Of youthful summer bloom,
To rise upon my dearest way,
And blow with sweet perfume.

Life is a dreary, winter day—
Dark clouds are flitting by;
A chill of grief hangs o'er my way,
And darkness fills my life's sky.
There are some flowers within my heart,
But they are dying there,
They form no bright, unfolding wreaths,
All beautiful and fair.

Glad memories cluster still within,
Of scenes long passed away;
But saddened is the present scene,
Like some dark autumn day.
No present hope of joy is there,
To harmonize those notes
Of memory, which, once fresh and fair,
Now in sad accents flow.

O, there is winter in my heart,
And sighs and sobs are there;
Those buds, which once were fresh and bright,
Are now no longer fair.
The damp, chill winds of grief
Blow o'er me loud and strong,
Like music of some funeral dirge,
Or a low, requiem song.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE LOST POCKET-BOOK.

BY MRS. CAROLINE OKER.

"I wish I could attend the concert to-night," said Miriam Hilton, "looking up from her sewing—and you, mother, wouldn't you like to go? The tickets are only twenty-five cents."

"I should be pleased to have you go, Miriam, but I am not particularly anxious to attend myself. You know John said this morning he thought of going, and perhaps he will be willing to take you with him."

"He may, though I hardly think he will," said Mrs. Hilton, without making any reply to this, laid her sewing aside and rose to complete the arrangements for dinner. She had just finished when the door opened, and a young man about one or two and twenty entered. He was handsome and intelligent looking, and there was something in his careless, joyous air, which presented a strong contrast to the patient, subdued look that pervaded the countenance of his sister, and communicated itself to all her movements.

His presence, however, seemed to send a sunny glow through the features of the small apartment, which was reflected in the eyes of both his mother and sister. With such high health and spirits, it did not seem as if he belonged in that little scantily furnished room.

"Why, mother," said he, laughing, when they had seated themselves at the table, "I didn't suppose that we were to have another edition of that roast veal for dinner today. To confess the truth, I am beginning to grow tired of it."

"You know, John," said his mother, "that we are obliged to make everything go as far as we can."

"Yes, but there is no use in being too saving," said John, looking at his mother.

"Do you intend going to the concert, this evening?" said Miriam.

"I shall probably go."

"Can I go with you?" said she, in a low voice, as if she felt that she was asking too great a favor to be granted.

"Pray, Miriam," said he, "what has put it into that little head of yours, to think of going to the concert? It will, I assure you, be one of the most miserable affairs that ever happened."

"Because I expect to meet some of my general acquaintances there—not for the sake of hearing a few old ballads sung."

"But you know, John," said Miriam, "that I always loved those old ballads, and Mr. Melmond is said to be such a fine singer."

"I am really sorry that it will be inconvenient for you to go. Some other time will do as well, though, I should suppose. To-night, as soon as the concert is over, I am to accompany those friends I spoke of to Hamilton's saloon, where we shall spend an hour or two in pleasant chat. You can easily see the advantage of my cultivating the acquaintance of such young men as James Harder, Will Elkinson, and several others who are the sons of wealthy merchants."

"On the contrary," said his mother, "I am afraid it will be a disadvantage to you. The expensive amusements they are in the habit of indulging in, are beyond the limited means of a clerk, with a small salary."

"Such generous-hearted fellows as Elkinson, and some of the rest of them, will not hear of such a thing as my paying anything, when we have a champagne or oyster supper."

"Take my advice, my son, and never consent to partake of such luxuries as you speak of, unless you can pay your share of the expense. To accept favors of that kind, creates a feeling of dependence, which must necessarily impair self-respect."

"Never mind, the time may come when I shall be able to reciprocate them," and he left the room humming a lively air.

Nothing was said either by Mrs. Hilton or Miriam for several minutes after he was gone. A few tears wrung from the latter, at the thought of not being able to attend the concert that evening—the one solitary amusement she had ventured to propose to herself, during the whole of the cold, tedious winter-fall on the garment she was sewing. A sudden glance at her mother's sad face made her exert herself to rally her spirits, and it was not long before she was able to regain her usual cheerfulness. Mrs. Hilton expressed the regret she felt on account of her disappointment.

"O, don't mind it, mother," said she. "I didn't care so very much about going. I have been thinking that I might afford time to finish

reading that book I began last week. By reading aloud, we can both be amused at the same time, which will be much better than if you had been left alone all the evening."

For some time everything to appearance went on much as usual. Mrs. Hilton and Miriam continued to ply their needles unceasingly, as a means of support, except the time necessarily demanded for the household labor, and John continued to discharge his duty as a clerk, in a manner satisfactory to his employer. One, however, if permitted to look behind the curtain, would have seen that he was rapidly contracting habits of expense, which far exceeded his ability to pay, although for some months past he had failed to hand his mother the small sum which he considered his share of the household expenses. He was only too happy to be on terms of intimacy with such young men as James Harder and Will Elkinson.

At first, as he had on one occasion intimated to his mother, when he mentioned bearing his share of the expense of some costly entertainment, they all joined in insisting that he should do no such thing, at the same time assuring him that the pleasure of his company was enough—all that they desired. After a while, however, it was not uncommonly to happen that none present were in funds, in consequence of which, the owner of the establishment, honored by their patronage, soon ran up a somewhat heavy account.

One evening, James Harder being the first to arrive, Mr. Hamilton asked him if he was to look to them collectively for his pay, or whether he was to present his bill to some individual, belonging to the company or club, or whatever they were pleased to term it.

"John Hilton will stand under what little there is due," replied Harder. "He has never paid anything yet."

"Very well," said Mr. Hamilton, "but will it not come rather hard upon him? His salary is small, and he either does, or ought to help support his mother and sister."

"That's his lookout. It is nothing more than reasonable that he should pay for the privilege of being allowed to associate on terms of equality with such fine fellows as Elkinson, Dilmore, and the rest of us."

At the close of the entertainment, therefore, during which champagne had circulated freely, a bill amounting to seventy-five dollars, was put into the hand of John Hilton. When, on being by himself, he examined it, his first impulse was to withdraw from the society of a set of young men, by whose influence he had been allured into incurring expenses beyond his ability to pay, and by rigorous economy save enough to liquidate the debt.

This excellent resolution he did not find himself strong enough to keep. The young men, especially Will Elkinson, for whom he had long entertained a preference, were so cordial, and moreover so pleasant and amusing, when ever he happened to meet them, that he could not resist the temptation of joining them as usual when they met together.

He said nothing to his mother and sister about what he owed, yet they could see that he had lost much of his cheerfulness, and that at times he appeared anxious and uneasy.

Things were in this state, when, towards the close of a cloudy day, as Miriam was on her way to carry home some work she and her mother had been doing, she found a gentleman's pocket-book. She put it in her pocket, and made more haste than ever to reach the place of destination. Having left the work, and what she did not much expect, received the pay, she returned home with as little delay as possible, as was anxious to examine her prize.

"Did Mr. Frost pay you?" said her mother, as she entered the room.

"He did. There's the money, and here is something I've found," said Miriam, producing the pocket-book. On opening it, a pile of bank-bills was exhibited, and in one of the compartments were a number of gold pieces. The whole amounted to exactly fifty hundred dollars. They had just ascertained this, when John entered the apartment. He came unexpectedly, for he had been absent as late as ten or eleven. Had not the situation been so fully explained, they would have seen that his face was flushed, and that his manner was hurried and excited. The gleam of the gold coin on the table at once caught his eye.

"Mother," said he, in a voice raised above its natural pitch, "you told me this morning that you had not a dollar in the world. Here's gold, and bills too. I must have them, or I'm ruined—undone—shall lose my situation."

As he spoke, he reached out his hand to lay hold of the money. Fortunately, the table had a drawer on the side where Mrs. Hilton stood, which, being partly open, she swept the money into it in season to prevent him from taking it. She then said:

"What has happened, John? Why shall you lose your place?"

"Don't ask me. It's enough that I tell you the truth."

"Do tell us, John," said Miriam, who looked very much frightened.

"Give me the money, and I will."

"It is not ours to give," said his mother. "It was in a pocket-book, which Miriam, when she went to carry the work home, found in the street."

"And belongs, I dare say, to some rich old miser, who has no possible use for it."

"It is enough for us to know that the money is not ours. What we received for the work, though we need it for many things, you may have."

"What good would that do, when I owe three hundred dollars?"

"Three hundred dollars?—for what?"

"Well, in the first place, Hamilton has a bill against me for seventy-five. The club had been so low in funds for some time, that it frequently happened that no one could pay. Some one told Hamilton that I would settle the account, and of course, I cannot be so mean as to refuse."

made an attempt to draw on Mr. Markland for a quarter's salary in advance, but he refused to let me have a single cent. So I sold my watch for thirty dollars—less than half what it cost me, and tried my luck at the gaming-table. I lost the last mill of it, and over two hundred dollars more, which I borrowed of Harder and others. They want their money—so does Hamilton. Harder, though he has always pretended to be one of my best friends, has even threatened to expose me to Mr. Markland, if I don't pay him within the next twenty-four hours. If he does, it will cost me my place, for he will not employ a clerk, who ventures his money at the gaming-table. Three hundred dollars will save me, and yet you will not let me have it. Will you not intercede for me, Miriam?"

"We must not," said she, "do evil that good may come."

"No," said his mother, "we cannot do that. We can toil for you when we should sleep—we can, for your sake, live on bread and water, but we cannot be guilty of crime."

At this moment, the name on the back of a letter, which must have slipped from the pocket-book unperceived, caught the eye of Miriam. They had, previously to John's return, examined, without success, to see if it contained any papers, which would reveal the name of the owner. The superscription, which was "Joseph Barton, Louisville, Kentucky," Miriam read aloud.

"Joseph Barton," said his brother. "What do you know of Joseph Barton?"

"He must be the owner of the pocket-book. The name is on the back of the letter, which must have slipped from it unnoticed."

John took the letter from his sister's hand, unfolded it, and quickly glanced his eye over the contents.

"Do you know anything about this Mr. Barton?" said Miriam.

"He is Mr. Markland's nephew. He and Mr. Markland led the store, not fifteen minutes before I was born."

"And where were they going?" inquired his mother.

"To the residence of Mr. Markland, I suppose."

"Then Miriam better go there, at once, for if Mr. Barton is the owner of the pocket-book, and there appears not to be much doubt that he is, he will soon miss it, which will cause him much anxiety."

"I am glad we have ascertained who it belongs to," said John. "I no longer feel any desire to retain it, though it would save me from disgrace and ruin. Come, Miriam, put on your bonnet, and I will go with you, for it is growing dark."

Almost at the same moment that the brother and sister were at the dwelling of Mr. Markland, that gentleman entered his store, in company with his nephew, Joseph Barton.

"Where is John Hilton?" inquired Mr. Markland of the shop-boy.

"He went out a short time after you and Mr. Barton left."

"Did you see anything of a pocket-book after we were gone?"

"A new red morocco one, with a silver clasp," suggested Mr. Barton.

"I did not," was the boy's answer.

"I think I must have left it in the store," said Mr. Barton, "for I don't see how I could have lost it from my pocket."

"How long did Hilton say he should be gone?" said Mr. Markland.

"He said he might be absent all the evening."

"He did?"

"Yes, sir; and he told me if Mr. Hamilton should send him his bill, or call himself, to tell him intended to see him in the course of the evening, and pay him."

As the boy said this, significant glances passed between Mr. Markland and Mr. Barton.

"Did Mr. Hamilton send the bill?" Mr. Markland inquired.

"No, sir, he came himself. Hilton had not been gone five minutes when he called."

"And what did Mr. Hamilton say when you told him what Hilton said about paying him?"

"He said if he had any money, he would be twice as likely to gamble it away as to pay an honest debt with it."

The two gentlemen now conversed aside, in a low voice.

"There is certainly cause to suspect Hilton," said Mr. Markland. "If he had not taken the pocket-book, how could he have money to pay Mr. Hamilton? This morning, for the third time within a few weeks, he requested me to pay his quarter's salary in advance, which I refused, having been told that he had of late been seen several times at the gaming-table."

"I am very sorry," said Mr. Barton. "He appears to be an active, capable young man, and his appearance has prepossessed me in his favor."

"I am sorry for him, and still more so for his mother and sister," said Mr. Markland, "who maintain themselves by their own industry. John lives with me, and I believe when he first came with me paid regularly for his board; but for some time past, as I accidentally learned, he has been mean and selfish enough to indulge in expensive pleasures, which have absorbed all his earnings, caused him to run in debt, tempted him to try his fortune at the gaming-table, and finally, as I fear, to take what is not his own."

"John is afraid so," said Mr. Barton; "but we will not judge him too hastily, for though I have the impression that I left my pocket-book here, I may be mistaken."

As Mr. Barton ceased speaking, John Hilton and his sister entered the store.

"We have been to your house, Mr. Markland," said John, "where we expected to find Mr. Barton. Miriam has found something, which we think must belong to him."

"Is it a pocket-book?" said Mr. Barton, coming forward.

"It is," replied Miriam. "A letter contained in it, directed to Mr. Joseph Barton, made my brother think it must be yours."

"There were fifteen hundred dollars in the one I lost."

"Just the sum contained in this," said Miriam, producing the one she had found, and handing it to Mr. Barton.

"Will you please to count the money, sir, and see if it is all right?"

"Exactly," said he, after running quickly over it.

For a moment, he retained in his hand one of the largest gold pieces, his eyes resting at the same time on the countenance of Miriam, which bore the impress of delicacy and refinement. If it had been his purpose to offer her some reward for returning the pocket-book, he abandoned it, and suffered the piece of gold to drop back into its place.

"Will you favor me," said he, "with the name of the street, and the number where you live?"

She gave him the desired information, which he wrote in pencil on a card.

"You reside with your mother, I believe. If you think it will be agreeable to her, and to yourself, I will do myself the pleasure to call to-morrow evening."

Miriam was very certain that her mother would be pleased to see him, and accompanied by her brother, she withdrew.

"John," said Mr. Markland, calling after them, "I should like to have you return here, when you have seen your sister home. I wish to have some conversation with you."

"I will come," was the young man's reply, though he was far from coveting a private interview with his employer, whose countenance, he imagined, was graver and sterner than ever.

"Well, Miriam," said her brother, after they had gone a few steps, "your finding the pocket-book has turned out rather a lean affair. He might, at least, have given you enough to pay you for your time and trouble."

"I have done right," said Miriam, "and that is reward enough of itself."

"If it is so, it is no excuse for his being mean."

"I cannot think that Mr. Barton is mean. If he is, I will give up all pretensions of being a physiognomist," said Miriam.

It was with a good deal of reluctance, that Hilton, according to his promise, returned to the store. It would occupy too much space to enter into the details of the conversation between him and Mr. Markland. Finding his employer fully advised relative to the manner in which he had conducted himself for the last few months, he made no attempt at palliation. Mr. Markland told him, that at the close of the year for which he had engaged him, and it lacked only a few weeks of the time, he should have no further occasion for his services.

"It will prove my ruin," said Hilton, "if you turn me away, for it will prevent me from obtaining employment elsewhere. Let me remain three months on trial, and if I give the slightest cause of dissatisfaction, in any way which I cannot avoid, I will go without saying a word."

After some hesitation, Mr. Markland acceded to his request. He knew it would be difficult to find another who would fill his place, even at much higher wages, yet other considerations, which had no reference to himself, were those by which he was controlled.

"If you don't break your promise," said Mr. Markland, after some further consideration, "I will do better by you than to retain you at your old wages. I will raise them one third. My increasing business warrants me in making this offer, and I may be able to give you still more by another year; for as much of my time and attention will be required to conduct your task will necessarily become harder."

Young Hilton was much moved. He did not attempt to express his thanks by words and language would have been less eloquent than the fervent pressure he gave the hand which Mr. Markland offered him at parting.

During the following day, as Miriam sat at her sewing, her thoughts often reverted to Mr. Barton. She did not think as her brother did, that he would forget to call, or that the fortunate circumstance of his recovering the money he lost, would, at once, pass from his mind. She felt certain that he would not only retain it in his memory, but that he would give tangible proof of it in some way. But whether he called or not, a burthen was taken from the spirit of her and her mother, almost too grievous to be borne, by Mr. Markland having consented to retain John, who having received so severe a lesson, had no wish to evade the promise which he had voluntarily given.

After tea, Mrs. Hilton and Miriam resumed their sewing as usual. About seven o'clock, some one rapped at the door. As they expected it to be Mr. Barton.

Mr. Barton was one of that class who possess the secret of imperceptibly causing aside the barriers of restraint, which many of fallen fortunes often feel to be interposed between themselves and those in the enjoyment of wealth.

Mrs. Hilton, a lady of education and refinement, was gifted with superior colloquial powers, that she and Mr. Barton were soon engaged in pleasant conversation, which, after a while, Miriam found herself contributing.

Two hours having passed rapidly away, Mr. Barton rose to take leave. Approaching a table, beside which sat Mrs. Hilton, he placed upon it a small package.

"There are some papers which belong to you," said he, "which I believe on examination, you will find to be correct. As respects your daughter, I am deeply her debtor, but of this I will speak hereafter. In the mean time, I hope that you will permit me to cultivate an acquaintance, so unexpectedly, and as far as I am concerned, so happily commenced."

The permission was granted in the same spirit it was asked, and after Mr. Barton was gone, Mrs. Hilton remarked that she had seldom met with a young gentleman, whose appearance, in every respect, pleased her so well.

In examining the papers he had placed on the table, it was found that they secured an annual income during her life, sufficient to make her comfortable. He was right in supposing the arrangement would be more grateful to Miriam than if he had bestowed the gift on her. For

reasons which may be readily appreciated, she preferred to be dependent upon her mother, rather than to have her mother be dependent on herself.

Many and various were the conjectures of those who happened to see him when he sometimes entered or left the house. Conjecture was, however, exchanged for surprise, one evening about six months afterward, at a large party.

"Where is your friend Barton, this evening?" was the question asked of a gentleman, by the hostess.

"At Mrs. Hilton's, I presume," was the answer.

"By the way," said the lady, "don't you think it very strange, that a gentleman like Mr. Barton should spend all his evenings with that poor widow and her daughter?"

"Not in the least. He is engaged to Miriam Hilton,—will probably be married in a few weeks, and as she and her mother have not been admitted into what is called genteel society, since it was found that all which Mr. Hilton left at his decease was barely enough to pay his debts, he prefers to cheer their solitary evenings by his presence."

John Hilton never gave Mr. Markland cause to regret that he suffered him to remain with him three months on trial. The business soon became so extensive, as to make it necessary to employ several subordinate clerks, and in a few years the old sign was taken down, and a new bearing the inscription of "Markland & Hilton," supplied its place.

A short time previous to his marriage with Miriam, Mr. Barton purchased a commodious dwelling in a pleasant part of the city. Miriam and her son reside so near, that the mother and daughter, whenever they please, can spend a few hours in each other's society.

HABITS OF CELEBRATED MEN.

Milton was fond of a glass of water and a pipe. In a letter to a friend, Dr. Parr confesses his love of "hot boiled lobsters, with a profusion of shrimp sauce."

Dr. Monrolet, an ancient writer on fishes, was so fond of fish, that he died in 1563 of a surfeit, occasioned by eating them to excess.

A modern poet, who was asked by a lady of fashion what he would like to dine, answered, "peppermint cordial and cold pudding."

Baron Moscovitz, who lived nearly to the age of ninety, used to go home one day in every week without any dinner, eating only a round of dry toast at tea.

When Bolognino invited Swift to dine with him, he talked of a true dishes he would serve. A fig for your bill of fare," said Swift, "show me your bill of company."

Pope, who was an epicure, would sit in bed for days at a time, eating nothing, unless he had some stewed lambs for dinner, when he arose instantly and ate up the whole to the table.

Aristotle, like a true philosopher, seldom ate more than a frugal dinner. Few could live more frugally. In one of his poems he says of himself that he was "the least of men."

Dryden, writing in 1699 to a lady, declining her invitation to a handsome supper, says, "If beggars might be choosers, I should have selected bacon would please my appetite more than all the marrow puddings, for I like them better plain, having a vulgar stomach."

A gentleman treated Dr. Johnson to new honey and clovered cream, of which he ate so largely that he was obliged to retire to a bar-room. A lifetime Dr. Johnson had a voracious stomach for a leg of mutton. "At my Aunt Fortch's," says he, "I ate so much of a boiling leg of mutton, that I was obliged to take it to my bed, as I was affected by little things, told me seriously that it would hardly be forgiven."

Dr. George Everard contended that, as one meal a day was enough for a lion, it ought to suffice for a man. Accordingly, for more than twenty years he ate but one meal a day, and that in the whole course of the day. This solitary meal he took regularly at four o'clock, at Dolly's chop-house. I pointed out a half of roast beef, half a broiled chicken, a plate of fish, a bowl of port, a quarter of a pint of brandy, and a tankard of strong ale, satisfied the doctor's moderate wants till four o'clock the next day, and regularly engaged one hour and a half of his time. Dinner over, he returned to his home in Essex street, by way of a capital change, with any of his anatomy and chemistry.—*Eccentric Anecdotes.*

LARGE STORIES.

We have all heard of big "fish stories," but the following, which was related some time ago, by one of a lay crew, is a bar-roomer. We think, "take the palm." After all the others had told a yarn, Bob Bonkey's turn came, and he commenced:

"Well, I'd been out hunting one afternoon, had dreadful luck, fired away all my shot, and hadn't brought down anything yet. I began to be discouraged, and was thinking of going home, when all at once a lot of robins—there were fifty of 'em, and all in a row—were flying over a capital change, with any of his anatomy and chemistry.—*Eccentric Anecdotes.*

"How many robins did you say there were?" asked a bystander.

"Just fifty."

"And they were all strung on the ramrod?"

"Surely. Have you anything to say again?"

"O, no, certainly not; only I must have been a pretty long ramrod, that's all."—*Yankee Blade.*

THE OLD KENTUCKY HOME.

"Your old Kentucky home! you poor soul you," said Mrs. Partington, as she thrust her nightcap out of the window away almost into the midnight to catch the notes of the song an individual was singing, in a dismal voice, near her dwelling.

"There were your friends could take keer of you and do for you. It's a terrible thing to be in distress away from home, particularly where you ain't acquainted with any of 'em; but I don't think it looks well for a man to wake up a whole neighborhood at midnight with his sorrow." She saw him disappear a moment afterwards in a shop with a red curtain, opposite, and with the remark that she guessed the poor creature had gone in to get something to eat, she investigated his clemency "with, she shut down the window, and in five minutes by the wooden mantel clock she was fast asleep in her chamber, with a young gentleman, whose appearance, in every respect, pleased her so well.

It may be no less dangerous to claim, on certain occasions, too little than too much. There is something captivating in spirit and integrity, to which we often allow ourselves to be drawn, nor can be reasonably expect the confidence of others who too apparently distrust himself.—*Illustr.*

(Written for The Flag of our Union.)

TRIBUTE

TO THE MEMORY OF MISS M. J. G.

As stinks the sun at close of day
Behind the western hills—
As does the lovely morning flower,
When autumn's cold first breeze,
So she hath sunk into the tomb,
While in the prime of youthful bloom!

No more we'll meet her in the walks
Where we were wont to meet;
No more upon our path will beam
Her smiling, so warm and sweet;
For she hath left us, nevermore
To join us on this mortal shore!

No more that soft and beautiful voice
With joy our hearts will thrill;
No more those quiet, love-lit eyes
Will meet our own, so still;
We must upon the spirit's shore,
Where loved ones wait, pass on no more!

For O, that voice is hushed in death,
Those eyes are closed forever;
She sleeps the long and dreamless sleep
That knows no waking hour.
Thy tears, dear heart, cease to flow,
And blight our fairest, dearest flower!

But there's a land where death does not,
Far, beyond the tomb;
Where friends will never, never part,
And flowers forever bloom.
When on life's wave we're tossed,
There may we meet the early host!

(Written for The Flag of our Union.)

THE GIPSY'S FATE:
—OR—
THE ENGLISH GARDENER.

BY M. V. ST. LEON.

In one of the sunniest and most quiet spots of "Merrie England," on a high sloping bank overlooking a lovely interval through which a small river ran, was situated the ancient family mansion of the Evelyns, and named "Hall 'th' Wood." When this mansion was first built, it was nearly imbedded in a grove, from which circumstance its name was derived, and though all that now remained of the grove were a few noble old sycamores in groups around the hall, and a double line on each side of the avenue, yet the thickly wooded hills and slopes which sheltered the intervals, as well as a beautiful clustering line of elms on the little peninsula that stretched out on one side of the rustic bridge, prevented the name from becoming inappropriate. And the sheep and cattle on the meadow, quietly grazing, or standing in the river under the shade of the trees, the waving herb of the sun's rays, and the quivering light through the green leaves, rendered the whole landscape fit for a painter's eye.

The family at the hall consisted of Squire Richard Evelyn and his daughter, Miss Helen, a beautiful young lady of twenty-two, and in the vacation they were entertained by a visit from Master Harry Hazelton, the old squire's nephew, a spirited, merry-hearted boy, nearly fifteen, and the idol of his uncle. The whole establishment was the best, the best as well as a beautiful place, and Shapley Morgan realized it as he used to rest on his spade upon some green sunnily. He was not the head gardener nominally, though in reality his opinion carried the day. Active, industrious and ingenious, far better educated than the generality of his class, and possessed of much kindness, he was looked up to by the servants more than his station would entitle him to; he had a small but neat cottage, and a little kitchen garden which he found time to cultivate, besides a few rose bushes by the door, but the prettiest and most highly prized flower was his little daughter, Bessie, a bright and beautiful child of three years old. She was a perfect spirit, and when her father would try to scold her for some wild prank, she would whisper to him, "fiddle her little arms, and placing her head on one side, gazed archly with her roguish eyes from behind the clustering light curls which she had shaken over her face, and the chiding would end by her father's catching her up in his arms and flinging her toward the ceiling, declaring "she was his own little darling mischief of a Bessie."

Miss Helen, too, took a great deal of interest in the little thing, and frequently would have her at the house for a week at a time, where she was petted and waited upon like a child of the family, and even the old squire himself would give up to her pretty wardeness. It was a wonder she was not utterly spoiled by such unbounded indulgence, for every one was tender to the motherless child; yet it seemed to have no injurious effect upon her, so she continued from year to year, twining herself into the affections of every one about the place.

When Bessie was six years old, among the visitors that summer at Evelyn Hall, were the Earl and Countess of Allonby. His lordship was much pleased with the intelligence of Morgan, and it was fully settled that he should have "Hall 'th' Wood" for the situation of head gardener at Allonby Park. The next morning after this arrangement, Miss Helen came down the rose walk with her easy, genteel step and manner, and stopping where Morgan was at work, said:

"And so you are going to leave us, I hear?"
"Yes, miss—it's not that I expect a pleasant home, for that would be hard to find, but it's natural for a man to be always looking to a little higher station, you know, miss."

Miss Helen smiled. "O yes, I know Shapley—but your little girl, who will look after her? You will have to leave her behind."

At the mention of his pet, Shapley's face had looked distorted, but at the mention of leaving her he eagerly exclaimed:

"O Miss Helen, I could not live without my little Bessie. She's my comfort and pet—but it's very grateful to me to see, miss, for the care and kindness you've shown to the poor child, and I'll never forget it, Miss Helen."

"Very well, Morgan, I know how it is, and it would be hard to deprive you of such a child, and she is all the little girl you have. I hope she may be spared to be a comfort to you in your old age."

"Thank you, miss—God bless her!" he ejaculated, as she turned down the next walk. "God bless her and send her the finest lord in the kingdom for a husband!"—and the satisfied he had wished for her the greatest blessing on earth, he resumed his work with renewed vigor. Little did the worthy gardener suspect that had he wished for her partner in the life of the son of a certain curate, it would have been back more heavily responded to by Miss Helen Evelyn. By another week, Shapley Morgan was installed at Allonby Park as head gardener. His son Leonard, a boy of fourteen, and little Bessie, were homesteaded at first, for they were not yet acquainted with any one on the estate, and Bessie would stand for hours on the splendid bridge with Moorish arches that spanned the lake at its narrowest part, gazing down upon the swans in the water below, and wishing for some playmate with whom to wander through the grove, that stretched out in a miniature headland, and that sunny green slope encircled by trees on all sides save that next the lake, and that sandy beach shelving down to the water.

One day while she was standing as usual on the bridge, she thought of Miss Helen, and wished some kind lady would come to her now and pet her as she had always been. While she was wishing, she saw a party of gentlemen and ladies come down to a little cove, attended by two servants, who unmoored a row boat, when the whole company entered and pushed into the lake. They were too far off for Bessie to distinguish their faces, but she hoped they would come nearer, which they presently did. Bessie did not know who any of them were, but she admired the easy grace with which one of the ladies held her parasol, and thought it must be a fine thing to be a great lady, and Miss Helen, who had hitherto been the standard of all gorgeous magnificence, fell far short of this lady, who dressed more for a morning sail than the former would have done for an evening party. As the boat approached the bridge to pass beneath it, Bessie leaned over to see them, when one of the ladies happened to glance upward, exclaimed:

"See, Clara, what a beautiful child!"

Covered with blushes and confusion at being detected in gazing at them, Bessie drew back from their sight and hid herself behind a projection. But the last one of whom she was so curious, wishing to speak to her, landed on the steps at the foot of the bridge, and advanced towards Bessie, who drew back to make way for them. But Lady Clara Allonby stopped, and smoothing back the curls which had fallen over the child's face, said:

"What is your name, my dear?"

"Miss Helen Morgan," said the child, regaining herself somewhat.

"Bessie Morgan," repeated her ladyship, "why your father is head gardener, and you are the little girl who used to be Miss Evelyn's pet, are you not?"

"Yes, my lady. Miss Helen loved me, and used to let me come and stay with her a whole week at a time, but now I've nobody to pet me," she stopped and colored brightly, for she felt she was very bold to talk so freely to a stranger. But Lady Clara was pleased with the artless simplicity of the child, and said:

"You seem to be a very nice little girl, I think you must come home with me—would you like to, dear?"

Now Bessie and her brother had spent a deal of time wondering how Allonby House looked inside. Lenney always maintaining quite stoutly that he had no doubt it was as fine as Aladdin's palace, and believed there was even a rose egg suspended in the drawing-room, which opinion he had striven hard to convince his sister was a veritable fact, but she had always been a little skeptical, and she now thought she should like to satisfy herself, and he was able to tell Lenney all about it, so she said she should like to go very much. Lady Clara took her by the hand, and she went gaily up to the splendid house that had always seemed a forbidden mystery to her.

In time the little Bessie became as great a favorite with the countess as she had been with Miss Helen, and even more, for Lady Clara's love of children amounted to a perfect passion, though she had none, and Bessie was petted and loved, almost as much as her own would have been. Surrounded by such influences, the child grew up a graceful, beautiful girl, rather slender for her age, with the sweetest, most thoughtful smile, and an easy elegance in every motion.

About this time, her father, from being a hale, hearty man, lively and affectionate, became thin and haggard, all his vivacity and spirits forsook him, and he grew morose, averse to companionship with anybody, never laughed or joked with his children as formerly, and poor Bessie, who was now thirteen, and Leonard a young man, were much troubled at this change. In vain did Bessie strive by unusual gaiety to rouse her father from this melancholy state—her cheerfulness seemed to aggravate his gloom if possible. While Bessie was thus burdened with care and sorrow, a ray of happiness shone forth to gladden her, and this new source of delight was the birth of a son at Allonby House. As the little fellow thrived and reached lusty babyhood, Bessie would frequently take some little trifle and trip across the secluded part of the grounds where her home was situated, to the house of the countess for an hour's romp with little Herbert. Notwithstanding the countess had now a child of her own, Bessie was still as welcome as ever, and frequently, when Lady Clara was without visitors, she would stay with her as a companion.

One morning as Lady Clara was sitting in an arbor, with Herbert (now three years old) in her lap, holding in his hand a pet goldfish, while

Bessie stood behind him, her golden curls not yet confined by a comb, shading her face, they became aware of another person's presence in the shape of a young and handsome man, whom Lady Clara welcomed with cordiality, and introduced to Bessie as Mr. Thornton. Mr. Thornton bowed and expressed much pleasure in making Miss Morgan's acquaintance, while Bessie felt an unaccountable aversion to this apparently fine man, which was not diminished by his perpetual admiration of her, and Bessie, grieved at an opportunity to escape his frequent gaze, eagerly begged Lady Clara that she might be allowed to complete the visit she was then making at some future time, as Mr. Thornton had announced that a party of her ladyship's friends were on the way to Allonby Park, and he had ridden forward to announce the fact. Lady Clara had always desired Bessie to remain at Allonby even when visitors were there, in spite of the disparity of rank, for she was very proud of her protégée, and although Bessie was now sixteen, still regarded her as a child, but Thornton's manner had opened her eyes to the fact that Bessie was a young and lovely girl, and she felt it was no real kindness to expose so beautiful a person to the notice of those with whom she could never associate on an equal, and thus perhaps unhurt her for her station in life, and therefore went to Bessie's surprise and relief she was allowed to return home, Lady Clara saying she should most certainly claim her the instant she was alone again.

That afternoon the expected guests arrived, and they formed quite a motley. There was the Duke of Rothsay, a brilliant, noble-looking man and an eloquent politician. The duchess, a cold, haughty beauty, with a chilling atmosphere always surrounding her, and Lady Margaret Stuart, the duke's sister, a bright, sunny picture of happiness. The Hon. Marcus Broughton, a cool, calculating statesman, keen and glittering as a diamond, and with whom the generous, impulsive duke often disagreed in politics. Lady Eleanor Broughton, a dreamy, poetical-looking woman; Lord Frederic Verisopht, a cousin of the duchess, and Mr. Plympton, a sort of humble friend to Mr. Thornton, a wily, sycophantic-looking man, who always echoed his patron's sentiments, and whom Thornton called "Plym," for the short of it, as he always said.

When Thornton discovered that Bessie had returned home he was quite vexed, and when informed of her humble station, was quite amazed, but he determined to see the shy, provoking girl, if she had run away from him; she was the first woman he'd ever dined, and she should not go so long—and with this laudable resolution he fortified himself. Accordingly Bessie was completely seized by her new acquaintance in all her walks, till finally she would not go out alone, as she did not know of whom to listen to the compliments, and receive the pointed attentions of Thornton.

In the course of a fortnight, a picnic was proposed by Lady Clara, and met with the approbation of her guests. Bessie had a fine musical talent which Lady Clara had encouraged and cultivated, and she therefore invited Bessie to join the party and entertain them with her singing. As the last one of whom she was so curious, wishing to speak to her, landed on the steps at the foot of the bridge, and advanced towards Bessie, who drew back to make way for them. But Lady Clara Allonby stopped, and smoothing back the curls which had fallen over the child's face, said:

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homeback for the remainder of her life. But Plympton seeing his patron's discomfiture, devised a plan in his own mind to remedy it by breaking the fire to one of the wheels, and when the company began filling the vehicles, it was discovered that Mr. Thornton's carriage was quite disabled, and would be obliged to follow in the course of the forenoon. Miss Louise therefore took Lord Verisopht's place in the coach, and that gentleman, with Bessie and Waddilow, mounted and rode off. Plympton staid behind with his principal. So, much to Thornton's chagrin, the party of pleasure commenced anything but agreeably, and Plympton, who had remained to tell his patron of his cunning contrivance, found he had better have gone on and escaped being made the butt of Thornton's ill humor.

However, all things have an end, even vexation, and when Thornton arrived at the picnic, his temper was considerably improved. Bessie was playing and singing, while the company were listening with profound attention, all except Waddy, who was softly sliding round to the baskets, peeping under the covering of one, and feeling gingerly of a paper bundle in another to form a probable guess as to its contents (and here let us say, on parenthesis, that on all subjects connected with good eating, Waddy was very clear headed), and during the last two verses had quietly and contentedly sat munching a sweet cake, listening with attention and exclaiming at its conclusion with a fresh mouthful, "Yes, very pretty—nice, come and get some of these macaroons, Bessie."

Thornton's appearance was greeted with pleasure, and the demand for a song. Advancing to Bessie, who gave him the guitar, he received it with an earnest, yet smiling gaze, and unseen by all except Bessie, touched his lips to it as he bent down apparently to examine it. Bessie, although confused, endeavored to appear as if she had not seen the action, but immediately Thornton commenced the prelude to a song.

"The maid I love is young and fair,
Though not so others be;
To me she's sweet, but she's not mine,
That makes her dear to me.

"It is her childlike confidence,
Her soft, appealing cry,
But ah, I'm in a sad suspense,
The maiden's search too shy.

"I know not if she loves me,
Although the blushing rose
Whom'er by fortune's fantasy,
I chance to meet her eyes.

"No word for me she e'er doth speak,
Save short replies to mine;
Her girl, her countess, her maid,
A heart so wholly thine!"

As Thornton sang the last lines, he fixed an intense yet reproachful gaze on poor Bessie, who had thought herself secure from his attentions while the song should continue, and found it converted into a source of annoyance. Lady Clara was vexed, Bessie embarrassed, and all the company began to see the drift of the song except Waddy, who with his mouth half full, exclaimed, "Well, really I should think you meant Bessie, but though you didn't, she deserves to have a song sung about her, and I'll compose one myself, sometime."

The general laugh that followed somewhat surprised Waddy, who saw nothing laughable, but he joined in it as he always did in any myth of such undoubted judges of wit, taking it for granted they knew best, and that there must be something very amusing going on.

"Well, you must have composed it yourself, it's so awfully-miserable foolish."

An uproarious laugh followed this speech, and the Hon. Mr. Broughton whispered to Lady Margaret, "How much a fool that's been to roam, excels a fool that's staid at home!"

"Pon onow, Lady Margaret, you are keeping some exceedingly with ideas far yav 'private edification. Pway invarn us what it is."

Lady Margaret replied, "they were speaking of travelling," and Lord Frederic turned to Thornton, who was leaning against a tree that overhung the river.

"Vow! foino givir that protoge of Lady Clara's. Aw've a great mind to have some conversation with her, but aw don't you think Alcantaw, she's aw-very wewowed, wather hard to come at."

"Yes, very much puffed up at being raised above her station, she makes quite too much of herself."

"You express quite my sentiments on thaw subject—great pity—chawming girl otherwise—aw twied to talk with her wading out haw, but all the way she indiscriminately lavished haw charms on Callaw—aw thought she might have managed better," and Lord Frederic smoothed down his moustache.

Just then Plympton came up to the party and announced that an old gipsy just the other side of the high wall at a little distance, said she would tell the fortunes of the lords and ladies if they would like. This announcement was received with many laughs and jests, but they all agreed for the sake of a joke to try her skill, the Earl of Allonby adding, "Of course the woman has taken means to ascertain who we all are, and we need be surprised at nothing she may tell us, for these gipsies are shrewd and very artful."

As the old woman would only allow one at a time to come to her, they drew lots for their turns. The Countess of Allonby's first, and she returned, saying the woman was pleased to set herself up for a potence, and repeated this rymed couplet:

"Much joy, more years, of crosses dew,
To her who's kind to risk and power."

A peal of laughter followed the recital of this doggerel, and Lady Margaret went to the gipsy. She rejoined them very shortly, and repeated:

"Thy path is, and shall be on roses, and yet
Thine's on prickling thorns, Lady Margaret."

The duchess next sought the fortune-teller, and repeated with a scornful curl of her coral lip:

"Sorrow shall school the heart that's proud,
And wreath the such pleasure with a shroud."

The next lot was drawn by Miss Louise. She came back laughing, and with much solemnity recited:

"Though now a maiden fair to see,
Yet you're a maid that shall be."

"My dear young lady, I advise you never to enter into the state of matrimony with such dismal prospects before you," said the Earl of Allonby.

"Thaw's so many additional chances aw've," lisped and drawled Lord Frederic.

Lady Eleanor's turn came next, and the gipsy holding her hand an instant, said:

"The grave and lowly have rolled off thy first love,
But soon thou'lt meet him thou lovest, above."

Lady Eleanor turned pale and hastily departed, and on joining the company, said she did not think she could repeat the words exactly, and it would lose all interest if not told correctly.

Bessie now went. The place was on the further side of a plank fence, a high bank running at right angles with the fence and forming two walls, and in the corner stood the gipsy, a malicious, spiteful-looking hag, whom Bessie recognized as belonging to a gipsy encampment that had been stationed on the common near Lord Allonby's country seat several years. She held Bessie's hand a few moments without speaking, and then eyed her with such a murderous leer, that Bessie's gaze sank, and her heart beat quickly, but reflecting that no harm could possibly be intended her by a person whom she had never injured, she quietly avowed the old woman's verse, but instead of the expected rhyme, the hag, without taking her eyes from her companion's face, said:

"Bessie Morgan, would you like to know the reason of your father's alteration?"

Bessie started, but controlling herself, replied: "I should—but what light can you give me?"

"You shall judge for yourself. Will you promise not to scream or weep, and above all never to relate what I shall tell you?"

Her companion with a pale, eager face gave the required promise.

"Remember," said the gipsy, "you are not to utter a sound or cry. Listen. Shapley Morgan, your father, is a murderer!"

Bessie screamed not faintly, but in a low, husky voice, and with trembling limbs, said:

"Have a care, woman—you must prove what you say."

"Ay, and that I can to your heart's content. See!"

Then she produced a large, rusty, garden-knife which was carved on the handle with the name, S. Morgan. Bessie with a shudder, recognized it as the mate to one her father owned, and remembered that this very knife had been lost three years ago, and that search was made for it, and it chokingly gasped:

"What of that knife?"

"Much, and more to you, Bessie Morgan," and she held her companion's arm firmly; "I myself saw him do it!"

The woman's manner was not to be doubted, and Bessie felt a deadly chill creep over her.

"O, what shall I do, what shall I do!" gasped the poor girl.

"Do! I'll tell you. Marry some rich man and have the matter hushed up. No one cares to speak when they're paid for being silent. With your face and manner, you may surely do that—are you certain the chance is not even now before you?"

Bessie shuddered. "O, could she marry Thornton?" But the thought hardly flashed across her mind as it was away over by a flood of old cherished memories. "William Kennedy her playmate in childhood, her protector, and lover in girlhood—she was her only love, and his wife only would she be," and turning to the gipsy she inquired, "Why do you tell me this—why advise me?"

For your own interest, and perhaps mine. I love gold, and I tell you unless I am paid a price that only a wealthy man can give, I will reveal all without reservation, so take your choice—disgrace or Thornton."

Bessie did not, could not answer, and the woman added:

"You have a week to decide in—now go—and mind you betray no agitation to your folks," and she menaced Bessie with her finger.

As the wretched girl joined the group, her face was pale, her hands icy, and her brain burning, yet she managed to conceal her emotion from all but Lady Clara, who said in a low tone:

"I hope, my child, you are too sensible to be affected by an idle fortune-teller," while the duchess remarked to Lady Margaret, "These low classes are always so superstitious!"

Now came the gentlemen's turn. Thornton went first, and had scarcely gained the enclosure, than he eagerly exclaimed:

"Have you succeeded?"

"I cannot tell—the answers were not very flattering to you," drily answered the gipsy, "and I think you had better desist from further pursuit."

"Desist? Not I—that's a thing I never do. The foolish girl will find it useless to struggle against fate. But how do you think she will decide?"

"That will depend on circumstances. I should say the more you keep out of her sight, the more likely you will be to succeed."

Thornton bit his lips at this unsatisfactory advice, but resolved to follow it, if he could. He then returned to the company and was followed by the others, after which came lunch.

Thornton had by a circumstance too intricate to be here narrated, become acquainted with the fact of this old gipsy's having witnessed the murder committed by Bessie's father, and immediately devised what he thought would be a sure plan to obtain Bessie. The old woman's being on hand at the picnic, was a convenient means, and she had agreed for a certain sum to play the part assigned her, that of threatening Bessie into Thornton's power.

In consequence of the gipsy's advice, Thornton's manner was quite altered. A distant, respectful air, instead of his former bold admiration, made him appear much better, yet Bessie's resolution never faltered. But that night as her

weary head rested on its quiet pillow, she felt unconquered by a net, for though she could hardly believe her father guilty, she knew others would think less leniently, and it might be her duty to save her father by sacrificing herself. At last a thought entered her mind—she would see Thornton—she would urge him to abandon his cruel persecution of her, for the felt persuaded, though why she could not tell, that he had installed the gipsy to her threat. Accordingly the next day and several succeeding ones, she no longer avoided the spots where she had been annoyed by Thornton's joining her, and sought these places at the times she had been accustomed to, but all in vain, he whom she had thought met when she did not wish to, now seemed to have vanished, and it was really so, for Thornton was following the gipsy's advice.

But one afternoon, unable longer to resist an impulse of curiosity to regard Bessie's movements, Thornton entered the shady path leading in the direction of Margaret's cottage. He had not advanced far when the sound of weeping reached his ear, and on listening, he heard his own name uttered in tones of reproach. The thick carpet of dry leaves prevented the approach of Thornton from being heard, who believing himself to be the cause of these tears, and that Bessie had repented of her conduct towards him, bent down, and placing his arm around her waist would have drawn her to him, but in the instant, the astonished girl stood before him with flashing eyes, and trembling with indignation, demanded:

"How dare you touch me, despicable wretch!"

Even Thornton's eyes sank beneath the lightning flash of hers, but he replied:

"Why, what a storm about a trifle! I meant nothing, that you should resent it so. What's the matter?"

"Matter! Is it not enough matter that you not only insult and annoy an unoffending, defenceless girl, but you must threaten her with sorrow if she will not become your wife? Do you call yourself a man—a gentleman? and amuse yourself with attacking a feeble woman? What sort of a partner do you think a girl would make, who is forced into a marriage she loathes? How will she regard the man who obliges her to become his wife by compulsion?"

Bessie saw by the red flush which had mounted to Thornton's face as he commenced speaking, that her surmise was correct as to the part he played in the affair, but the covert, sinister smile which had passed over his features and gleamed out from his eyes, as she had alluded to his compelling her to be his wife, had not escaped her, and a terrible light flashed through her mind. Could it be that it was not as a wife he intended her? She determined to assure herself, and answered feebly to his question:

"Why would she not save herself so much misery?"

"I must ask my father's consent."

"No, no, my dear girl," for Thornton, thinking she was wavering, quite forgot his position, and so, it must be private to effect its object. My father would disinherit me if our marriage were to be known. But it will be no less a union for being kept secret—I can command the services of a young friend who has just taken orders to perform the ceremony, and then, dear Bessie, you will be mine—and you shall never regret it, my angel!"

And he again attempted to clasp Bessie in his arms, but with a calm content in manner and voice, she replied:

"Stand back! I have heard enough to convince me that there lives a creature so base, the very air he breathes is pollution. Alcester Thornton, you know it is not as a wife you seek me. Do your worst—bring shame and sorrow to those who never intended you or yours, destroy the good name of an innocent family if you will—but never look for another word from Bessie Morgan!"

And with an air of regal dignity no one could have believed her capable of, she swept by the amazed Thornton and disappeared.

"Gone, by Jove! Who would have thought it! And here I felt that I was, imagined she was coming over to me, that I was sure of winning," and the baffled, enraged villain gave way to a perfect storm of fury. But rising at last with an awful imprecation, and a threat of "paying off the little witch," he moodily retreated to Allanton House.

Poor Bessie! Trouble seemed gathering around her whicewher way she turned, yet one heavy load was taken off her conscience. It was clearly her duty now not to listen to Thornton, and all she could do was to remain quiet and await the progress of what she could not control. The storm burst at length in all its fury, and Shapley Morgan was imprisoned on the charge of murder. The whole neighborhood was astounded. His friends, and they were many, said his innocence would be proved, but his enemies, and his gloomy loneliness for the last three years had created some, said his moroseness had not been for nothing, and they wagged their heads significantly. But when the trial came on, even his friends were spalled at the evidence of one of the witnesses—the old woman before mentioned. Her story was as follows, divested of the inaccuracies of expression in the original.

On the night of the 19th of March, 18—, now three years ago, I was out late in search of some herbs near the ruins of Dunraven. (Dunraven had formerly been the residence of the family of which the Allantons were a branch. The ruins of this castle were on a distant part of the estate, and its solitude was seldom disturbed.) The moon was struggling through watery clouds, for there had been a heavy rain, and the wind yet whistled and blew quite high. Suddenly, as I looked up, I saw a glimmer in one of the windows of the underground apartments of the ruin. My curiosity was excited to know the reason of a light in a place so utterly deserted. I therefore advanced, and hidden by the dense masses of ivy I looked in, and saw in the middle of the apartment by an open trap door, Shapley Morgan, and a man well known in these parts, and whose mysterious disappearance three years ago caused so much wonder—

James Wilcox. The former was holding a dark lantern, while Wilcox was standing in a trench which he had apparently just dug, and throwing up the earth under the flagging. Wilcox presently exclaimed, "We've come to it at last, and I heard a ringing sound as if something metal had been struck." "The chest is so large it cannot be here, shall we shall have to open it," said the man with the money, said Morgan. Wilcox opened the chest and commenced filling the bag which had been thrown down. At last he came out of the pit. They shovelled the earth back, replaced the flagging, and then sat down to divide the treasure. But now a dispute arose between them. Wilcox wished to divide equally, but Morgan was unwilling. High words were spoken, and from thence blows, till at last they grappled and fell, Wilcox underneath. Morgan struck him several blows, and at last a tremendous one caused Wilcox to utter a heavy groan, and fall back with a dull, heavy sound.

"Morgan sprang up, and having satisfied himself of Wilcox's death, took a pickaxe and commenced raising the flagging, intending to bury the body in doubt, when by a movement, I started an owl in the ivy, who flew screaming to where Morgan was at work. Starting up in fright, and letting fall the pickaxe, he hastily clutched the bag and fled, overturning the lantern in his confusion. I remained quiet until all was still again, and then entered the ruin. On the floor lay the murdered man, and beside him a small brilliant jewel which he had dropped. (Here she produced them both.) I have kept them, as the coins are not such as are now used, and I dare not change them. I left the ruin and returned the next day, but the body had disappeared in the night, and all traces of it were gone. I suppose Morgan took care of it."

Morgan pleaded guilty to the murder, but denied all knowledge as to what became of the corpse. He was sentenced to be hung, but during the three months that intervened between his sentence and the execution of it, his children visited him frequently, and at last Bessie would enter the cell at morning, and stay till night, when Leonard came for her. Time passed, and the last day Morgan ever was to see rose clear, warm and cloudless. The birds sang merrily, the leaves rustled in the breeze, and the air was filled with perfume. It seemed as if Nature had put on her brightest dress for the criminal's last gaze to rest upon. There wanted but half an hour to the time he was to be led forth to the scaffold, and Leonard and Bessie were with him, the latter clasped in his arms, while Morgan was counselling them with regard to their plans. "When I am no more, do not remain in England, but go to the new, free country—to America. You are active and industrious, Leonard, and will find plenty of friends and employment, and Bessie will be safe from the pursuit of Thornton, besides, there will be no one to remind you of the disgraced name you bear. Promise me this, my children." Bessie, deeply moved, yet in a firm voice, gave the required assurance.

In a few moments the officers came for Morgan, and poor Bessie, who had always been the pet and plaything of the old man's heart, was so overcome that she fainted in her brother's arms. Morgan was led forth and mounted the scaffold with a firm step. The clergyman in attendance had knelt, and the hangman prepared for his duty; as the cap was placed on Morgan's head a shudder passed over his frame, but in an instant he was firm again. There was a deathly silence amid the crowd which was gathered around.

"Stay, stay, I command you!" rang out a clear, brave voice above the multitude, and a tall, lean, and in several points, nearly naked man, the scaffold, and turning to the wondering crowd, pulled off his hat, and exclaimed:

"Does no one here know me?"

A loud cheer burst from the assembly, which rose and swelled like the roar of the ocean.

"Hurrah, hurrah, three cheers for Wilcox!"

Morgan, who had at the first sound of that voice snatched the cap from his head and gazed wildly around, now drew the new comer by the hand, while the tears poured down his aged cheeks. Wilcox, seeing Morgan's distress, attempted to cheer the old man by his lively exclamations:

"Why, man! I believe you're sorry to see me back! We'll have another botch yet, but it shall be a fairer one than the last. Cheer up and shake hands with old friend!" and all the while the speaker drew the back of his hand across his eyes and face, to wipe the perspiration he said.

A happy day was that which had promised so much misery at its commencement, and the Morgans listened with eagerness while the man most questioned if it were not all a dream, as Wilcox related his adventures.

"The first thing I remember after that blow, which laid me senseless, and as you supposed dead, was a dull, heavy pain in every joint of my body; as I looked about I recollected where I was and what had passed, and on rising, found that although very lame and sore, no bones were broken. I went out of the ruin and was thinking how I should escape, for to show myself in the state I was in would be sure to excite suspicion and reveal the night's employment, when an old horse belonging to the gipsy encampment passed by, and began to crop the herbage. As it was saddled, I instantly mounted and started for the next town. I arrived at dawn, and leaving old Dobbin to find his way back, went on board a schooner that was just leaving for America, and engaged to work my passage—on in particular I recollected, across his nose, for I met him one season at Baden-Baden, when I was in the suite of the ever-to-be-lamented Amelia, consort of his late royal highness the Prince of Saxo-Lessingen—and, by the way, I expect this very day, from a friend of mine at court, a miniature portrait of the present sovereign, his serene transparency, Maximilian. I knew him when a boy—a sweet youth! He must have altered much since I saw him then."

Carline hastened to her room and gave utterance to her feelings in the following letter to her school friend, Clara Von Lindberg:

going back myself, as a sort of pioneer for you, if you'll agree to it!"

"It's the very thing we've been thinking of, Mr. Wilcox," said Leonard, "and we should be glad to have some one who knows about the country, and perhaps the Kennedys will go with us, Bessie," he added, looking towards his sister, whose cheeks were instantly crimsoned.

"The more of us the better," answered Wilcox, "we'll make quite a settlement."

The Earl and Countess of Allanton were unwilling for the Morgans to go at first, but Shapley said, "the old place would never seem so pleasant again, as it once had," and they agreed with him, and although Lady Clara wished much to retain Bessie for a companion, she encouraged the project and aided them in it. On account of Thornton's persecution of Bessie, the party sailed sooner than they had intended. In the backwoods of America they found a happy and cheerful home, where contentment and prosperity blessed them to the end.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

SLEEPING BEAUTY.

BY J. ALPHONSO.

O, had me to some quiet grove,
Some hand which meditates love,
Where trees, with foliage thick arrayed,
Combine to form a rural shade.
And spread profusely round, I mean
That slumber's lovely form again;
Where all is silence, save the breeze,
That softly whistles through the trees,
And tinkling streams that slowly creep,
And low voice murmurs lull to sleep.

Where beauty in repose is laid,
There let me court the cooling shade,
There too, my heart with passion fraught,
Shall choose the fane of tender thought.
Then ever charming, ever dear,
Shall mine's lovely form appear.
The tide of tenderness shall flow,
And the full heart o'erflow the eye.

Yet, should my steps by chance invade
The bowers that hide the sleeping maid,
Where loveliness abides so true,
And still her fair cheeks radiant glow—
In the soft arms of tender rest,
Her curls ring by my presence pressed,
Whose slender limbs peculiar grace
On her sweet form and beautiful face,
Be mine the task from rude alarms,
To guard that heaven of slumber charms.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

A PRINCE FOR TEN MINUTES.

BY FRANCIS A. DUBOYAS.

Rich! the made for beauty is a man,
And not a money-chest—LUCRECE.

The Baron Von Rudenuff was a widower, and lived, with his lovely daughter Carline, and his maiden sister, in a rickety old tower, embowered in immemorial trees, and looking down over a wide expanse of water. He was proud of that old tower—proud of his lovely daughter, proud of his old maid sister, proud of the few relics of his feudal past, which modern liberalism had yet left him, proud of the five and forty quarters of his ancestral shield, proud of his intellect, the laboratory of mystic fancies as vague and vapory as the clouds from his spacious manse, proud as Lucifer, in short, of himself and everything about him.

Carline, on the contrary, was as modest as a lily of the valley. She had been educated in a convent, and was all gentleness and goodness. The blue of her own bright hair seemed reflected in her eyes, and the blush of her favorite rose upon her cheeks, and so soft was her voice as she sang the plaintive melodies of her native land, that you might have deemed it the song of the water-spirit that sometimes lures the voyager to forgetfulness of all but the wailing melody.

"To-morrow," said the old Baron, "to-morrow comes the promised sister."

"Is he young, father?" sighed the maiden.

"He is the Baron Von Gruffenstein," replied her father, as he filled his pipe.

"Is he handsome?" asked the daughter.

"He is noble," was the answer.

"Has he dark hair?"

"He is rich, my child."

"Has he black eyes?"

"He has a cross before his name,—what more can you desire to make you perfectly happy?" replied the Baron, emitting an enormous cloud of smoke, and sitting down seriously to the indulgence of his solitary luxury.

Carline, who was not particularly fond of tobacco-smoke, sought her aunt.

"Dear Aunt Meena," said she, earnestly, "can you tell me what manner of man is this Baron Von Gruffenstein who threatens us with a visit to-morrow?"

"My dear child, he is a noble, and is rich and generous,—a most unexceptionable match," replied the old lady, gravely.

"My father had told me all that," replied the young lady. "But I wish to know more. I don't choose to marry merely a title and a rent-roll."

"O, the perversity of this generation!" exclaimed the Baron. "This all comes of that odious French revolution."

"I didn't ask you about the French revolution, aunt," replied Carline, rather sadly.

"O, about this Baron! Well, well, he is fifty years of age, or thereabouts—very fond of snuff, I'm told; here the old lady took a pinch from his famous Louis Quatorze box. "Is not remarkably handsome, for he was always fighting duels for a host of years, and he was very good at it."

"I met him one season at Baden-Baden, when I was in the suite of the ever-to-be-lamented Amelia, consort of his late royal highness the Prince of Saxo-Lessingen—and, by the way, I expect this very day, from a friend of mine at court, a miniature portrait of the present sovereign, his serene transparency, Maximilian. I knew him when a boy—a sweet youth! He must have altered much since I saw him then."

Carline hastened to her room and gave utterance to her feelings in the following letter to her school friend, Clara Von Lindberg:

"Schloss Von Rudenuff, August, 18—.

"DEAREST CLARA,—I write to you in the greatest distress—you alone can sympathize with me—you alone can pity your poor friend. Ah! how can I ever break the vows to your brother Karl! Clara, I am a victim. We used to read about such things in the romances our mother porters. Unluckily I happened into the convent for us, but though I wept over the recitals of the sufferings of our heroines, little did I think such trials were encountered in actual life. Yet here I am completely in the power of my father, and he threatens to marry me to an odious wretch, the Baron Von Gruffenstein—and he old enough to be my father. And Karl, dear Karl, away with his regiment! If I had but that miniature he promised me, it would be some consolation. I should clasp it to my faithful heart, and it might inspire me with courage, unfriended and alone as I am, to struggle against my destiny."

Thus far had the fair writer proceeded when a knock at her door interrupted her. She rose, opened it, and found the old butler, who was waiting to give her a couple of sealed packages, one addressed to her aunt, and the other to herself. Then, alone again, she hastily broke the seal of her parcel, and discovered to her delight, the wished-for miniature, the portrait of a very handsome young guardsman of whom it is only necessary to remark that he was the antithesis of the Baron Von Gruffenstein, as described by her aunt. She gazed upon the picture with enthusiastic delight, and was so absorbed in her contemplation, that she was not aware of the entrance of her aunt, until the shadow of that good lady's cap fell upon the image in her hand.

"Carline Von Gruffenstein," said her aunt, in a tone of great asperity, "I insist upon knowing whose portrait that is!"

Here was a dilemma! Carline dared not tell the truth, and after a momentary struggle with her conscience, answered:

"Excuse me, dear aunt, for the liberty I took, but I thought it no harm. It belongs to you—it is the portrait of the Prince of Saxo-Lessingen."

"His serene transparency!" exclaimed the good old lady, with a scream of delight. "Where are my spectacles! Let us look at the features of my adorable prince. Bless me! he has altered. How very handsome! Don't you think so? Isn't he charming?"

"Very charming!" said the young lady, with a sigh.

"A person to fall in love with at first sight!" pursued the old lady, holding the miniature close to her nose.

Carline blushed, and was silent.

"He is very like what the Baron Von Gruffenstein used to be before he fought those duels at Heidelberg?"

Carline wished in her soul that one of them had been fatal, but she did not venture to express her sentiments.

"Brother's brother!" screamed the old lady, running out of the room. "There's his serene transparency, the Prince of Saxo-Lessingen!"

Carline, left alone, deprived of her wished-for picture, spitefully opened the other package. It contained the veritable portrait of the prince, whom she remembered to have seen once when he visited the convent,—a fat-nosed young man, with a good natured expression, but very lack-luster eyes, very thick lips, and very scraggly yellow hair. She threw it into a drawer in disgust, and then sat down to finish her letter to Clara, making it as sentimental as possible, and dwelling at full length upon the new misfortune that had befallen her. She had hardly finished it, when she heard a great commotion down stairs, and both her father and her aunt bawling out one after the other of their lungs:

"Carline! Carline! come down this moment. Let us go back a little and inquire into the cause of this disturbance."

The Baron and his sister were still admiring, as in duty bound, the handsome face of the supposed prince of Saxo-Lessingen, when the clatter of horses' hoofs was heard, and directly afterwards a servant announced Captain Von Lindberg.

The Baron had never heard the name, but he advanced to greet his guest. He had no sooner set eyes on him, however, than he exclaimed:

"His serene transparency! Welcome, prince, to Schloss Von Rudenuff!"

"His highness?" screamed the maiden sister.

"His highness! what an honor! Your highness does not recollect me, of course, but your highness must have heard your highness's mother speak of her poor maid of honor, Meena Von Rudenuff."

"Highness! Highness!" exclaimed the captain. "My good friends, you labor under a mistake. I am plain Captain Von Lindberg, and nothing else."

"Before the servants, your highness," said the Baron, "if your highness wishes to remain in our house, your humble servant will call you Captain Von Lindberg, if such be your transparency's pleasure, but allow us, here, where disguise is useless, to bestow on you the title you adorn."

"I can never call your highness anything but your highness," said the old lady.

"But I say I am Captain Von Lindberg," said the soldier, testily.

"Ha! ha! Excellent, faith!" cried the Baron.

"Laugh, you jade!" he whispered, nudging his sister. "Don't you see his highness is trying to be funny?"

"He! he!" squeaked the poor old lady. "I never knew anything so droll, your highness!"

"Highness! again!" cried the captain.

"Zounds! I'm crazy! What put that idea into your head?"

"Is n't this your portrait?" asked the old lady, extending the miniature.

"Certainly," replied the captain. "How did you obtain it?"

"It was sent to me from court, your highness," said the old lady, triumphantly.

"You drive me mad!" cried the captain.

"I shall be qualified for a lunatic asylum in five minutes, if this goes on. For heaven's sake, send for Carline!"

"Now, then," said the captain, as the Baron's daughter made her appearance, "we shall soon know who's right. Don't you see, taking the soft hand of the girl, 'look at me,' and tell my good friends here who I am."

Carline, after one glance, cast down her eyes demurely, dropped a low curtsy, and answered, "His royal highness, the Prince of Saxo-Lessingen."

"You, too?" exclaimed the captain. "You're all mad in the Schloss here!"

"At this moment, the gallop of a horse was heard without. Captain Von Lindberg sprang to the window.

"All right!" said he, after a glance. "Here comes somebody that will set matters right."

A moment afterwards, a short, thick-set, good-natured young man, with a flat nose and thick lips, wrapped in a riding-coat, made his appearance, and bowed to the company.

"Your highness," said the captain, respectfully; "you come to relieve me from a perplexing predicament. These good people insist upon it that I am the Prince of Saxo-Lessingen. Now you can enlighten them. Tell them who you are—that will be enough."

"I!" replied the stranger, with a curious wrinkle of the eye. "Certainly; I am Captain Von Lindberg!"

The captain started back aghast.

"There! there! your highness!" cried the Baron, rubbing his hands. "I knew I was right."

"But I tell you," said the captain, pointing to the new comer, "that there stands the Prince of Saxo-Lessingen."

"He a prince!" said the Baron. "Fie, your highness; you wrong your rank! Our friend, the captain is—excuse me, sir—not quite handsome enough to belong to the blood-royal. He can never have without being convinced of the fact. Don't blush, captain; a soldier ought to have such a face as your's—but a prince—"

"He a prince!" cried the old lady. "What a libel on the blood-royal!"

The stranger laughed heartily. Throwing off his cloak, he discovered a uniform, on the breast of which blazed the insignia of his high rank. It was amusing to witness the horror of the old couple at this announcement after the freedom with which they had just justified his appearance.

"I'm not a very handsome man, I acknowledge," said the prince, wiping away the tears of laughter. "But really, I've never been told so to my face before."

"O, your highness!" cried the Baron. "I meant not handsome to the eyes of the vulgar. But to a judge of noble blood, your highness's face is full of character—the air of breeding and command—the dignity of—of—Carline, were n't you struck with his highness's air the moment you saw him?"

"No, my good Baron," said the prince, "and she would not accept my hand while she has such a handsome suitor as my gallant life-guardman. And this brings me to the business that led me to Schloss. I found out that this young couple were attached to each other, and that they intended to marry her to old Gruffenstein. So I rode here on the spur of the moment to dissuade a marriage; and to say that if you would consent to give your daughter to my friend here, I will give him the means of outbidding the old suitor."

After such powerful intercession, it was, of course, impossible for the Baron to persist in his scheme. The wedding of the young people was arranged, the prince passed the night at the old castle, and the supper-table was enlivened by a confession of the change of portraits that caused the ludicrous mistakes we have related.

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[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

CORA LEE.

BY ELLEN M. SMITH.

On the banks of yon blue river,
Where the golden lilies grow,
Lived sweet Cora Lee;
There, with Flora's gentle smiles,
Wandered off that fair young maiden,
Gently, lovingly, Cora Lee.

Golden were her sunny tresses,
Waiting for the wind's caress,
As they floated free;
In rich masses soft and curly,
O'er the fair neck, white and peony,
Of her darling, Cora Lee.

Whiter her dark eyes were beaming—
Ever in her fond heart dwelling
Of the deep, blue sea;
Wishing thoughts around it hover,
O'er its white waves sailed the love,
Of her pure, sweet Cora Lee.

At low's holy shrines low kneeling,
His deep passions there revealing,
Said he manfully:
"Ne'er could maid resist such wooing,
His wild words were but subduing
The poor heart of Cora Lee."

"O my soul is sad and weary,
Days and months are long and dreary
When away from her;
Thus and I might e'er sail never,
If thou wilt be mine forever,
Sweetest, dearest Cora Lee."

On the money bank rethinking,
Round his neck her soft arms twining,
With sweet, girlish glee,
A low "yes" she softly breathing,
While a blush was softly flushing
The pure brow of Cora Lee.

Long, long years of sadness,
Fought with sorrow, not with gladness,
All too slowly free;
How, when Cora's young heart cherished,
Neath the dark water, sadly perished,
Far away from Cora Lee.

O, she was a winsome fairy,
With her soft eyes, bright and starry,
Pure, sweet Cora Lee;
In the graveyard, dark and lonely,
There we placed our loved and only
Darling, lost, Cora Lee.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

IDA EVELETH.

BY M. H. C. BLADE.

"So now I have you, Frank, for the whole winter; and as you are just too ill to be busy, and just too weak to be closely confined, I shall be at my wit's end to keep you out of mischief." "Yes, Aunt Hester, I shall most remorselessly inflict myself upon you. Indeed, what else could I do? Safely through with my studies, and half dead with this horrible dyspepsia, with no home but a miserable hotel; more's the pity—what more or what less could I do than to come to you, and beg you to take me in and 'make me well again,' as you used to do in my boyhood?"

"Ah, Frank! you know you are the most welcome guest I have seen for many a day; you know you will make me as happy as I shall make you comfortable. So, bless you for coming to me! But if the Astor House is a 'miserable hotel,' a statement that ill accords with your former glowing encomiums, and you so covet a home, why don't you Frank Eveleth make for himself one, just to his mind? To begin your confidences exactly where you left them three years ago, when you told me everything because you could not help it; tell me, will you, why you are not married?"

"That is just the thing I want to tell you, Aunt Hester. I am the poor, homeless, single—well, he did say, 'that I am, for this reason alone, I cannot find my other—Heaven send she may be my better half.'"

"And what are the requisites you demand in a wife? Who knows but that even our little village may be able to supply you with one?"

"Out of the question, aunt, I am sure. Frank, excuse me, and don't take umbrage at my assurance; but, three years ago I know you were the only intellectual woman in the village, and I must have been an intelligent, well-educated, intellectual wife—or none. I want a companion, one who can sympathize with me in all my moods and pursuits, one whose finely-tuned mind can appreciate the excellent and the beautiful."

"And who possesses beauty of form and feature, and the mild home-virtues?" added Aunt Hester.

"Quite secondary requisites, aunt. You think me eccentric? Well, perhaps I am, but such only, as I have said, is the wife for me." Hester Woodford, the maiden aunt of Frank Farleigh, had been mother, sister, friend, to her nephew, since an early period of motherless dependence. Her house had been his only home in all his school and college vacations; for his father had been deeply immersed in the career of a very successful business, up to the time of his death, which occurred some two or three years before the date of our story. Since the death of her brother-in-law, Frank was her only relative, if we except a distant cousin, an orphan, young, and, but for her own exertions, left entirely destitute.

Lucy Grey was her name, and people who knew but little of her, said that Lucy Grey was a singular girl; she was so retiring, almost shy. Miss Woodford had, on the death of Lucy's mother, offered the young girl a home, but she preferred remaining in her native village, in an adjoining town, among those who had known and loved her mother, and would protect and cherish the orphan child. She had spent a few months with Aunt Hester, as she too, called Miss Woodford, and a very pleasant friendship existed between them.

"Where is our unlucky cousin?" said Frank, as he sat, the next morning after, and what was a shock to her, not long since, a sum of money, advising her to place it in the hands of her guardian, to be used for her as she thought proper, and bidding her apply to me if she needed anything in the future."

"Did you, Frank?" said Miss Woodford.

"Yes; and by the next mail she sent it back again; saying, she was in no need of such aid. She always was a proud, reserved child."

"Child, Frank! that was eight years old when you saw her last, and that was just twelve years ago. Is she still a child, do you think? You evidently advised her as such in your rather inconsiderate letter."

"Is she twenty years old? I confess I did not think of the passage of time. I only thought of the little bashful, pink-eyed, white-haired girl I used to dislike; and I wrote to her because I knew my father would have done so."

"Your description does not apply to her now," was Miss Woodford's brief reply. She added, "Lucy still lives at her old home; her own exertions render her above want. You may see her before long, for I am anticipating a visit from her."

Frank looked as if a brief silence to decline the honor, but after a while he changed the subject, and neither again alluded to Cousin Lucy.

"And who is this Ida Eveleth, whose name I see so often?" When he, he turned over the leaves of the magazines upon his aunt's book-table.

"I asked G—, in whose book most of her pieces are first published, but he laughingly told me that if I was interested in her he would leave it to his chivalrous spirit to find her. Do you know her?"

"There is certainly no family bearing that name among my acquaintances," was Miss Woodford's reply.

"I hoped that you knew her," said Frank. "I have made her character, as it is displayed in the clear, and beautiful, and lucid tone of her writings, my study; and, I confess she rises in my mind as the original of the picture I sketched for you last evening. Do help me to find her!"

He added, in a tone of mock solemnity.

"No," replied Miss Woodford, laughing; "I leave her, as your friend wisely did, to your chivalrous effort. If she is worth finding, she is certainly worth seeking. I can only add the hope that she may prove all you wish."

All that day Frank talked of sweet Ida Eveleth, quoted her words, recited her sonnets and sang her songs. The next day he said less about her, and the third not a word, nor did he mention her again for weeks; but upon that third day, enclosed in a letter to his friend, the editor, he wrote to Ida Eveleth; wrote, asking the privilege of a correspondence; and his request was granted; and more and more frequent came letters addressed in a beautiful feminine hand, to Frank Farleigh, Esq. Of course Aunt Hester was too polite to question her guest respecting his correspondents, and as he never alluded to his letter again, his secret remained all his own, of course.

The correspondence, at first confined to literary topics exclusively, grew, by-and-by, more and more personal and confidential, until, at the end of three months, Frank Farleigh, Esq., counselor at law, and heir to one of the finest estates in New England, offered his hand, where, he said, he meant to live in his immortal instance, had turned long before, to Ida Eveleth, the unknown poetess whom he had never seen.

The answer, brief and firm, was this—"O, blindest impulse of an impatient spirit, that would take one step in the dark, unknowing whether it be to joy or utter misery! Three months have you studied my soul; in the next three months look into your own heart, and then—renew our correspondence, if you still wish to do so."

And there it ended. Not, however, till Frank, unused to patient waiting, had written again, and again to the editor, entreating that his letters might be forwarded as before; but to no avail—the only reply he ever received was the evasive information that Ida Eveleth had faded away, gone to dreamland, and left no trace behind. So, in ill-disguised impatience, he settled himself to endure, not wait, through the three months of trial.

It was now autumn. A malignant fever had been spreading through the village. In the quiet life he had been leading, Frank had not previously been thrown in its way; but now, when the residence of his fiancée, his mother, rendered him peculiarly susceptible to its attacks, he recklessly crossed its path, and but a brief period elapsed ere he lay prostrated by its insidious hand.

In the ravings of his disease for the first time the name of his wife passed his lips. Ever grasping for Ida Eveleth he heeded not the anxious ministrations of Aunt Hester, nor the quiet and gentle, but prompt and efficient services of a young and beautiful girl who stood by her side, and upheld her weary hands. It was Lucy Grey, Cousin Lucy, who had come to the assistance of Miss Woodford. Days passed by, and with them the violence of the disease, and Frank found himself returning to health only to witness the more dangerous illness of Aunt Hester, to which she had been brought by her untiring efforts in his behalf.

Miss Grey had seldom seen since his convalescence. With a remnant of his old prejudices, he scarcely cared to see her, and giving himself up to dreams of Ida Eveleth, he sat, hour after hour in the dull listlessness of that half-waking, half-dreaming state that often succeeds a violent illness.

"Miss Woodford is much better to-night, and she has sent me to make tea for you," said the pleasant voice at his side, as he sat in one of his reveries. Frank thanked her. Just at that moment, he was really glad to have her with him.

"Anything," thought he, "to change the form of my solitude. I suppose she knows nothing, so I shall not be at the trouble to talk to her; but she does make tea excellently, and serves flowers beautifully, too." "Thank you, too," for these flowers, Miss Grey, he delighted to say, "they refresh me."

As Miss Woodford continued to improve, Lucy divided her time between the two invalids

until Aunt Hester declared herself able to be removed to the parlor. The reunion was pleasant to both Frank and herself. Cousin Lucy, as Frank now began, rather patronizingly to call her, seemed satisfied with any arrangement.

"How I wish you had read German, Aunt Hester," said Frank, one morning. "All night I have been trying in vain to recall a beautiful passage, once perfectly familiar to me, but of which I can remember but a single line." This he repeated.

"Cannot you render any assistance, Lucy?" quietly asked Miss Woodford.

Lucy repeated by reciting the whole passage, in a clear tone and unembarrassed manner. Frank was confounded, but he had sufficient presence of mind to thank her kindly, and to express an expression of astonishment.

As time passed on he found himself more and more interested in the gentle Lucy. Her quiet manners left him perfectly at ease, and while her gentle hand ministered to his comfort, he could not help confessing that he was pleased with her. By-and-by he found himself watching her every graceful movement, as she gently and quietly performed those little attentions that add so soon to the comfort of the sick room; and greatly he became restless and impatient when she was out of his presence.

When with him she made him happy and her serenity made him serene. She never seemed to him like the brilliant woman of his former fancy—he had forgotten his ideal.

"Come, Miss Grey," said Dr. Bartol, the physician who had attended both Frank and his aunt; "my patients can spare you this morning, and I am come in my carriage to give you a ride. You really need one; and," he added, in a low tone, but Frank's quick ear overheard it, "I wish to see you alone; I have a proposal to make to you."

As they drove away from the door, Frank remembered how attentively Dr. Bartol, who was a bachelor of forty, still very handsome, and decidedly engaging in manners and conversation, had studied the appearance and character of Lucy for many days.

He was startled when he remembered that only the day before he had made many inquiries of Miss Woodford respecting the situation and prospects of her young relative.

The drive was long, it seemed an age to Frank ere Dr. Bartol left Lucy at the door with a cheerful adieu.

It was long enough for him to discover that he loved his Cousin Lucy—it was not long enough for him to remember that he had loved Ida Eveleth.

He had not thought of her for weeks. The vision of the woman of intellect had given place in his mind to a sweet, gentle, face, out of which shone the light of the gentlest feminine virtues.

It was the same face, day after day during the last month, he had sketched in crayon, and with great truthfulness, for Frank was an amateur artist of much skill. It was the face of Lucy Grey, the once "ugly, pink-eyed cousin."

"Why do you go to the window?" said he, as Lucy seated herself at a distance. "Pray, come and stand here at your door. Of course it was delightful," he added, ironically.

"O, Dr. Bartol's proposal, that, too, was delightful!" said Lucy, with surprise. "You told Miss Woodford I was a foolish child. I have been trying, in my leisure moments, to finish a pair of slippers for a friend, but I will lay it away if it troubles you."

"No, no, no. I suppose they are for a pair of antiquated feet that need soft enclosures. I beg you to finish them, regardless of my nerves."

This time Lucy replied, in a grave, sad tone, "They were intended for a friend who is now so feeble that he cannot walk out of doors, but he is not antiquated, he is only a little older than myself."

Frank was abashed, he knew, now that they were for himself; he observed now, too, that they were of a peculiar color that he remembered to have admired.

"And Dr. Bartol make his proposal?" said Frank, after a still longer pause, as if determined to be impertinent.

"Yes," replied she. "And your answer?" he continued. "May I ask what it was?"

"I told him I needed time for thought. I could not decide at once."

"Ah, that was well! It is always well to take time for consideration. And now, Lucy, will you come and take this seat beside me, and give me your peevishness, and let me tell you I have questioned you with such seeming curiosity!"

Lucy hesitated. Her calmness had forsaken her; her usually pale face was flushed, and Frank thought he had never seen her so beautiful, as she took the designated seat, and with downcast eyes listened to his explanation.

He told her how lonely his life had been, and how he had longed for a beautiful home, and a dearly loved and cherished companion. He told her how, as years passed on, he had been repelled, rather than attracted by the artificial beings he had met in the society of the city. He had grown hopeless, at last, of ever finding the bright flower that should grace his heart and home; and now in this quiet village, frequently blossoming in humble retirement, he had found, what he had not thought of seeking, a sweet wild flower, fairer than all he had hoped to win.

"And now," he added, "how can I relinquish my newly-found treasure to one whose very age forbids that he should truly appreciate its loveliness?"

Lucy did not reply at once; her face was again in her hands. When she parted them, it was to say, with a sweet archness, "Dr. Bartol wished me to go to Georgia to be a governess in his sister's family!"

A bright smile crossed the clouds upon Frank's face, as he exclaimed, "O, will you, then, be my own sweet wild flower, my own dear wife?"

Lucy arose, and stepping lightly to the door, quoted his late words, "It is always well to take time for consideration," and left him alone.

Frank's thoughts were sweet and pleasant; one thing was certain—he was safe from interference on the part of Dr. Bartol, for the rest, he was hopeful.

"How I wish," thought he, "that Lucy would remain her portrait. She asked me to let her have it awhile, but I need its pleasant smile when she is not here."

Sitting in the cheerful firelight, as evening came on, Frank busily built the fairest castles, and the loveliest homes; but the light of them all was sweet Lucy Grey.

His reveries were broken, at length, by a servant who entered, bringing him a letter and a package, and that, said, a woman had just left at the door.

Frank remembered, with a chilling dread, that the three months had elapsed for whose passage he had once been so impatient.

He held the letter in his hand, in no haste to open it. At length he broke the seal. It was from Ida Eveleth! It was a brief but clear and full acceptance of his offer. She added, "I send you, too, the coming number of the magazine in which you first knew me, because it contains my portrait. I can only say that it will find much favor in your sight as you have assured me that the manifestations of my mind have done."

"Bold thing," said Frank, as he threw the letter down. "I'll be bound she's a great coarse woman of forty. I hate women who can do nothing but scribble."

At this moment John re-entered, bringing, as he said, a note from Miss Lucy.

This, too, was brief. "I have 'taken time for consideration.' I answer—yes!"

Poor Frank was in a sad dilemma. The folly of his former course was fully evident to him now. "What shall I do?" said he, and burying his face in his hands, he did not heed that the door opened, and a still foot stepped silently across the carpet, and a light form leaned upon the back of his chair.

"Well," he sighed, at last, "I may as well look upon the face of my immonstrous." And he peevishly tore the envelope from the magazine. Roughly brushing away the thin paper that covered the face, he saw—could he believe it!—the sweet smiling face, and rich sunny curls of Cousin Lucy! While below, in unmistakable letters, were the words, "Ida Eveleth," from a crayon portrait, by F. F. Esq.

"Boy! you are crying!" said Cousin Lucy! Cousin Lucy! and he passionately kissed the mate lips before him.

"Did you call me?" whispered a voice at his side, and in a moment Lucy Grey and "Ida Eveleth," one and inseparable, was folded in his arms.

"A secret for you, Aunt Hester," said Frank, the next morning, "a secret for you! I have found Ida Eveleth!"

"No secret for me, Frank! I knew her all the while."

"And why did you not tell me so? why did you not send me to her?"

"Because, Frank, you knew, already, the 'woman of intellect,' and I wished you to feel the need of, and to find the gentle home-companion. That was my object in your marriage. Blessings on you forever!—on you and my Lucy Grey—on you and your 'Ida Eveleth'!"

TURKISH WOMEN.

The care with which the Osmanlis have always kept their wives and daughters apart, still prevails in Constantinople. To ask a Turkish gentleman after his wife or his daughters, is to give him a mortal offense. If he alludes to them, he calls them "the home" or "the house." He will tell you that the house is well. Also when he announces to his friends the birth of a daughter, he says, "a veiled one," or "a closed curtain," and when his wife is taught by the korn to honor his wife, and to believe that she will be equally with himself, a participant in heavenly felicity. The teaching effectually displaces the vulgar error that declares Mahometans to believe that women have no souls. Polygamy is allowed to this day in Turkey, and is so surrounded with social and religious difficulties, that it is rarely practiced.

The korn allows a Mussulman to marry four wives, and even to take his concubines; but it is monstrous to marry only one. In Constantinople, the ulemas, the great bodies of government officials, the naval and military officers, the tradesmen and the workmen, have generally only one wife.

In the provinces, one wife is even more generally the rule. And now all the great officers of state make a merit of wedding one wife only to show a good example to their countrymen. Nor is the wife a slave entirely. In her own quarters she is supreme mistress. She may receive her female friends and her male relations; she may go out in the day, veiled and attended, and her husband consults her on all his affairs. She is not the painted doll we have read of. She is thoroughly domestic, and is respected by the korn from cruel treatment. The Mussulman is bound by law to maintain her according to his rank; if he fails in this, she may claim a divorce. When he marries her, he gives a present to her relatives instead of expecting a dowry as with us. She has the care of the household, and if he be poor she employs her leisure time in spinning. She has the exclusive right by law, to bring up her children—the girls until they are married, and the boys until they enter one of the public schools. If the Ottomans have one tender chord in their bosoms, it is that which is always awakened within them, at the sound of the maternal name. Women may even perform the functions of the Imam, recite prayers, and under extraordinary circumstances, they may be vested with political power, but, undoubtedly, the Turkish woman is not yet free. The law allows her to see her distant relatives only once in each year, and if her husband object to more frequent visiting, her relatives are also supposed to legal interference.—Household Words.

Truth is always consistent with itself, and Lucy did not reply at once; her face was again in her hands. When she parted them, it was to say, with a sweet archness, "Dr. Bartol wished me to go to Georgia to be a governess in his sister's family!"

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Jester's Picnic.

A shoemaker, notorious for his propensity to tease small children, once got the worst of it, while engaged in his booting, and, in the end, passed into the room where he was engaged at his work, and stood staring him very attentively. Finally he asked him why he looked at him so steadily.

"I was looking how black you are," said the urchin.

"O," replied wax-end, "my mother was chased by an Indian!"

The boy stood for a moment, with fixed gaze, then retreating to the door, and as about to go out, he said, with great earnestness:

"And I guess he caught her!"

A sedate old blacksmith, originally hailing from the Keystone State, but who had long made his residence among the tabernacles of the Buckeyes, was expressing to an admiring auditory on the Pennsylvania anti-railroad policy, and wound up as follows—"Ya-a-s, these railroads are bad things. In my younger days Pennsylvania had to travel a horse-back ten or twenty days to reach Ohio, and then they 'arred something on the way; now the railroads carry them there in as many hours, and set them down as given as when they started! Ya-a-s, railroads are bad things!"

A MODEL SPEECH.—"Fellow-chiggers—I am no speech-maker, but what I say, I'll do. I've lived among you twenty years. If I have shown myself a clever fellow, you know it without a speech. If I'm not a clever fellow, you know that, too, and wouldn't forget it with a speech. I'm a candidate for the Legislature; if you think I'm the clear gait, vote for me. I'm Mayor R. of a better stripe than I am, vote for him. The fact is, either of us will make a good representative!"

The editor of the Elk County (Pa.) Advocate is now on a visit to Philadelphia. During his absence, the boys have been editing the paper. The following is a sample of their diction. "When our beloved 'cadher' went away, he said, 'Boys, if you want any money, you must collect that due on the paper, as I have got only enough to take me to Philadelphia, and say the city if I like it!'"

An inquisitive landlady, recently, on discovering that one of her boarders had left, exclaimed, addressing her servant as available, "Bless me, the gentle foreign gentleman has gone away without paying his month's board, and left his trunk with nothing in it but bricks! I wonder how he got them there?" The servant girl suggested that he had brought them up stairs in his hat.

"Never do anything rash on an empty stomach. It was always good to have a little food in the stomach, and often into jail. If there is one institution more dangerous than another, to be worked on a vacuum, it is when some one corrected her mistake, and led her to the sepiarche."

That was a sad mistake of the patriotic and sentimental pilgrim to Mount Vernon, who mistaking the ice-house for the sacred tomb, poured out her whole stock of tears there, and was comforted when some one corrected her mistake, and led her to the sepiarche.

A gentleman dined one day with a dull preacher. Dinner was scarcely over, before the gentleman fell asleep; but the preacher, who had invited him to go and hear him preach. "I beseech you, sir, excuse me, I can sleep very well where I am!"

"O," exclaimed a poor sufferer to a dentist, "that is the second wrong tooth you have pulled out!"

"Very sorry, sir," said the blundering operator, "but as there were only three when I began, I'm sure to be right the next time."

A widow once said to her daughter, "When you are at my age, it will be time enough to dream of a husband."

"Yes, mamma," replied the thoughtless girl; "for a second time." The mother faint.

Henry Ward Beecher says that the last quarter of an hour of a long drawn and tiresome discourse gives a repugnance to religious truth, stronger than can be dispensed by two good sermons afterwards.

There is a certain softness of manner which, in either man or woman, adds a charm that almost entirely compensates for the lack of intellect. So thinks Susan going to be loved to death by everybody.

Some people suppose that man, like a nail, must be driven ahead to accomplish anything. The only difference is, that a man can go without being driven, and a nail can't.

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